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DÉDICACE.

À

MADAME GOVIN. C. DUTT.

Le fond du lac n'est pas toujours limpide ;
Qu'un voyageur, qu' un téméraire enfant
Jette une pierre en son cristal humide,
Un noir limon s'en élève à l'instant.
Mais, par degrés plus tranquille et plus claire,
On voit bientôt la vague s'aplanir,
Et, tout brillant de sa splendeur première,
L'azur du ciel revient s'y réfléchir.

Souvent ainsi le tourbillon du monde,
De mes pensers troublant la douce paix,
Vient y mêler comme une fange immonde,
Qui dans mon sein voile un moment tes traits.
Mais lorsqu'a fui la foule murmurante,
Lorsque le calme en mes sens est rentré,
Le voile tombe et ta forme charmante
Se peint encore sur mon cœur épuré !

X. Labenski. (*Polonus.*)

The lake's fair surface is not always clear,
If but a traveller, or a rash child near,
At random throw a stone upon its glass,
A dark ooze rises in a vapoury mass,
But by degrees more tranquil and serene,
The wave disturbed gets smooth, as it had been.
And pure, austere, resplendent as before
The blue, blue sky reflects itself once more.

Thus oft alas ! the discords of the earth
Troubling the sweet peace of my thoughts, give birth
To unclean slime, that in dense spirals roll
To mar thy gracious image in my soul.
But when the murmuring crowd away has fled,
And the calm enters in my sense instead,
The veil is gone ; thy loving face again
Gleams in my heart, as sunlight after rain.

T. D.

THE SLEEP OF THE CONDOR.

Leconte de Lisle.

Beyond the steep ramparts of the high Cordillières,
Beyond the dun fogs where the black eagle's eyrie 's,
Higher, far higher than the bold craters, like funnels,
Whence springs out the lava from its deep boiling tunnels,
With wings that hang down, jagged, red, in some places,
The condor looks silent o'er limitless spaces,
Across the New World, to the sun that no longer
Blazes bright in his eyes. The shadows grow stronger.
Night rolls from the east, against mountains in stories,
At whose feet the wild pampas display all their glories,
She darkens o'er Chili,—its towns, and the ocean
Which slumbers profound without ripple or motion;
On the continent silent, her banner is planted,
From the sands to the boulders, up gorges high-slanted
From crest unto crest, swell, advance her proud surges,
A high-tide of darkness, some power upward urges.
On the peak which is topmost where still a red lustre
Stains with a blood-streak the glaciers that shimmer
He awaits with a courage he knows how to muster
Alone, like a spectre, growing dimmer, and dimmer
The blackness that threatens like a sea to surround him:
It comes,—it is near,—at last, it has bound him.
In the depths of the heavens, on a sudden there lightens
The Cross of the South—a pale beacon that brightens!
There's a rattle of pleasure,—his neck is erect
Bare, musculous;—he peers his flight to direct.
He stirs,—whipping up,—the sharp snow of the Andes,
He mounts the blue ether with a hoarse cry that grand is,
Far, far from this globe by night's banner defended,
Far, far from its noise,—its strife,—its endeavour,
A speck—but a speck,—and as frozen for ever
He sleeps in the air, with his wings wide-extended.

II. SONNET.

Le Comte F. de Gramont.

All men for pleasant places are not born,
The world for each is open every way,
There are, who in the wild prefer to stay,
Love its free air, and solitudes forlorn ;
Like the wild horse they hold the towns in scorn ;
The torrents slake their thirst ; the woods display
Fit provender ; their roof skies blue or gray ;
No yoke or manger for the unicorn !
On some hill-top they ruminate in peace
Their fierce strange thoughts,—a melancholy train,—
When men enquire about them, God says,—Cease !
Oh harm them not,—or woe ! From bit and rein
I—I have given their stubborn mouths release,
Of me their exile—rich in fruit or vain !

III. THE PEASANT'S DILEMMA.

G. Lemoine.

I mean to wed the miller-maid,
His girl whose mill you see down there,
But here's the rub,—I love, and prayed
A shepherdess to be my fair.
My Fanchette is as bright as spring,
But poor, as winter, is her lot,
If one must do a foolish thing,
Why should it be, in sooth, for nought ?
Bah ! I shall wed the miller-maid
Who always makes sweet eyes at me,
Those eyes that ask in sun and shade—
Our marriage,—when is it to be ?

One instant, not so fast,—reflect !
Am I quite sure of happiness

With the rich mistress I elect?
I love her not, or love far less.
Marriage, alas! is not I own
A tie for one day or a year,
But then consider,—Love alone
If he keep house, gives meagre cheer.
Bah! I shall wed the miller-maid
Who always makes sweet eyes at me,
Those eyes that ask in sun and shade—
Our marriage,—when is it to be?

And yet my mind is far from gay,
And asks—is this the better part,
Thus my poor Fanchette to betray
To whom I plighted hand and heart?
How loving is she—oh the pearl!
How she must suffer, sob and sigh,
Alas! If I forsake the girl,
I think, I almost think, she'll die.
Bah! By my faith! O Money-bags,
When next thine eyes enquire of me,
Mine shall reply,—a crust and rags
With her, than all the world with thee!

IV. THE YOUNG CAPTIVE.

André Chénier.

The budding shoot ripens unharmed by the scythe,
Without fear of the press, on vine-branches lithe,
Through spring-tide the green clusters bloom.
Is't strange, then, that I in my life's morning hour,
Though troubles like clouds on the dark present lower,
Half-frighted shrink back from my doom?

Let the stern-hearted stoic run boldly on death!
I—I weep and I hope; to the north wind's chill breath
I bend,—then erect is my form!

If days there are bitter, there are days also sweet,
Enjoyment unmixed where on earth may we meet ?
What ocean has never a storm ?

Illusions the fairest assuage half my pain,
The walls of a prison enclose me in vain,
The strong wings of hope bear me far ;
So escapes from the net of the fowler the bird,
So darts he through ether, while his music is heard
Like showers of sweet sound from a star.

Comes Death unto me ? I sleep tranquil and calm,
And Peace when I wake stands by with her balm,
Remorse is the offspring of crimes ;
My welcome each morning smiles forth in all eyes,
My presence is here to sad brows, a surprise
Which kindles to pleasure at times.

The end of my journey seemed so far to my view ;
Of the elm-trees which border the long avenue,
The nearest are only past by ;
At the banquet of life I have barely sat down,
My lips have but pressed the bright foaming crown
Of the wine in my cup bubbling high.

I am only in spring,—the harvest I'd see,
From season to season like the sun I would be.
Intent on completing my round ;
Shining bright in the garden,—its honor and queen ;
As yet but the beams of the morning I've seen,
I wait for eve's stillness profound.

Oh Death, thou canst wait ; leave, leave me to dream,
And strike at the hearts where Despair is supreme,
And Shame hails thy dart as a boon !
For me, Pales has arbours unknown to the throngs,
The world has delights, the Muses have songs,
I wish not to perish too soon.

A prisoner myself broken-hearted and crushed,
From my heart to my lips all my sympathies rushed,
And my lyre from its slumbers awoke ;
At these sorrows, these wishes, of a captive, I heard,
And to rhyme and to measure I married each word
As softly and simply she spoke.

Should this song of my prison hereafter inspire
Some student with leisure her name to enquire,
This answer at least may be given,—
That grace marked her figure, her action, her speech,
And such as lived near her, blameless might teach
That life is the best gift of heaven.

A.

SONNET.

Felix Arvers

My soul has a secret that no mortal must hear,
A love, by its object, not guessed and not known,
A love, which as hopeless I never may own,
A love born to be buried with me in my bier.
Alas ! That unnoticed I must ever be near !
Always, always beside her, yet always alone ;
To the end of my journey as dumb as a stone,
Not daring to ask e'en for compassion a tear.
As to her, though God made her gentle and tender,
She holds on her path, meek, abstracted and calm,
Her life the rich music low-breathed of a psalm,
Nor dreams of the homage one's heart yearns to render.
And if haply O verse ! thou should'st fall in her way
" Ah me ! who is this lady ?" is all she would say.

APRÈS LE COUP D'ÉTAT.

VI. *Victor Hugo.*

Before foul treachery, and heads bent down,
I'll cross mine arms, indignant but serene,
Oh faith in fallen things,—be thou my crown,
My force, my joy, the prop on which I lean.

Yes, whilst *he's* there, or struggle some, or fall,
O France, dear France, for whom I weep in vain,
Tomb of my sires, nest of my loves,—my all,
I ne'er shall see thee, with these eyes again.

I shall not see thy sad, sad, sounding shore,
France, save my duty, I shall all forget ;
Amongst the true and tried, I'll tug mine oar,
And rest proscribed to spurn the fawning set.

O bitter exile, hard, without a term,
Thee I accept, nor seek, nor care to know
Who have down-truckled ' mid the men deemed firm,
And who have fled, that should have fought the foe.

If true a thousand stand, with them I stand,
A hundred ? 'Tis enough : we'll Sylla brave,
Ten ? Put my name down foremost in the band,
One ? Well, alone,—until I find my grave.

VII. LINES.

Victor Hugo.

Since every soul is weak, and set
On selfish aims, since men forget
The true, the pure, the great, the bright,
Instincts, at wrong, that chafe and swell,
Honour and glory, law and right,
And those who in the contest fell ;

I love thee Exile, with thy frown!
Oh Care,——be thou my thorny crown!
Welcome thrice haughty Indigence!
All hail, thou door that rough winds beat!
And thou, O Sorrow take thy seat
Grave statue, at my hearth, from hence!

I love the anguish sent to try!
For in its shadows draw more nigh
Those that my heart delights to see,
Faith, Virtue, Dignity, in turn,
Freedom, the exile proud and stern,
And Loyalty, the refugee!

I love this isle of rocks and caves;
Jersey, my Patmos,——o'er thee waves
Free England's banner grand and old!
I love the waters round that rise,——
The ship that on its errand flies,
And all that here mine eyes behold.

Ha! There's the sea-gull. See it springs
Pearls scattering from its tawny wings.
Then plunges in the gulfs once more,—
'Tis lost in caverns of the main!
No! No! It upward soars again,
As souls from trials upward soar.

But most I love this seat,—this rock,
From whence I hear the thunder-shock
Of waves eternally that moan,
Ever-renewed, methinks Remorse
Hath such a cry, and such a force—
Wail mothers thus for children gone!

VIII. SONNET.

THE TWO PROCESSIONS.

Joséphin Soulary.

Two processions met on consecrated sod,
One was sad,—it followed the bier of a child,
A woman was there, whose sobs bursting wild
Attested a heart crushed under the rod ;
The other was gay,—a mother who trod
Triumphant, friends, and a babe undefiled
(Who sucked at her breast, prattled nonsense, and smiled ,)
To be sealed with the seal that marks us of God.
The service done, the gatherings crossed each other,
And then prayer's mighty work was seen achieved,
The women barely glanced at one another,
But oh, the change !—in both the glad and grieved,
One wept by the bier,—'twas the joyful young mother,
And one smiled at the babe,—'twas the mother bereaved.

IX. THE EMIGRATION OF PLEASURE.

Madame Viot.

Affrighted by the ills that war
Had drawn upon unhappy France,
Pleasure sought in regions far,
Encouragement and countenance.
Through Germany and Spain to pass
Was weary work for miles and miles,
The Spaniard never jokes, alas !
And the German never smiles.

To Russia next. His hopes are vain,
The killing climate in a week,
Benumbed and sickened all his train,
And robbed the colours from his cheek.

By Catherine he was begged to take
The halls of snow that flashed like gold,
But could he, even for her sake,
Expose his life to death by cold ?

To England now. He wandered wild,—
And on the same fool's-errand bent ;
The Lord Mayor, fat, grey and mild,
Conducted him to Parliament.
Pleasure is courteous,—full of grace,
But from the truth he never shrinks,
'I cannot stay i'this horrid place,
Where everybody yawns and nobody thinks.'

Once more adrift,—on, on to Rome
Where burned the Muse's altar-fires !
Ah me ! it was only the home
Of a sick old man and some friars.
When he asked for Horace's verse,
Doggrel hymns were sung through the nose,
He felt he'd fallen from bad to worse,
And tears in his eyes unbidden rose.

Poor Pleasure ! How get back to France ?
That was the question for him now,
Without papers or money, small his chance !
A loan,—but who would a loan allow ?
Heaven-helpt, he reached the country dear,
And there at last saw Liberty ;
What has a pet spoilt-child to fear
Who falls with tears at his mother's knee ?

A.

X.

MY VOCATION.

Béranger.

A waif on this earth,
Sick, ugly and small,

Contemned from my birth
And rejected by all,
From my lips broke a cry,
Such as anguish may wring,
Sing,—said God in reply,
Chant poor little thing.

By Wealth's coach besmeared
With dirt in a shower,
Insulted and jeered
By the minions of power,
Where—oh where shall I fly ?
Who comfort will bring ?
Sing—said God in reply,
Chant poor little thing.

Life struck me with fright——
Full of chances and pain,
So I hugged with delight
The drudge's hard chain ;
One must eat,—yet I die,
Like a bird with clipped wing,
Sing—said God in reply,
Chant poor little thing.

Love cheered for a while
My morn with his ray,
But like a ripple or smile
My youth passed away.
Now near Beauty I sigh,
But fled is the spring !
Sing—said God in reply,
Chant poor little thing.

All men have a task,
And to sing is my lot——
No meed from men I ask
But one kindly thought.

My vocation is high——
'Mid the glasses that ring,
Still—still comes that reply,
Chant poor little thing.

XI. BERANGER TO THE ACADEMY.

Arsène Houssaye.

No, no, oh my friends, obtain no honours for me,
For your Institute I feel I never was born,
There are poets far better, that would grace it, you see,
I,—I am no scholar, but a fiddler low-born.
I know but to live,—to love,—to sing like the brook ;
I'll tell you my want, I'd like to live through this season
And read at my leisure ; dear Lisette is my book,
And my house my Institute,—pray deem this not treason.

What, what should I do—'mid your discussion and strife ?
I should have to write out, first of all, a discourse ;
Nought ever saving songs have I writ in my life——
And these welled without effort,nor was learning their source.
Here, gentlemen,—the Muse is familiar and gay,
Provided there be rhyme, none asks here for reason,
Here Courier has commented on Molière by the day
My house is my Institute—oh deem it not treason.

Ivy-covered,—you see it,—'tis decrepit with age,
But its swallows are punctual at the advent of spring,
What ! Ye deem me, birds vagrant, confined to my cage ?
I skim through past ages, and the world, on my wing !
After Noah,—well ! Aspasia the star-crowned, I met,
And Socrates,—I tried to console him in prison,
And Homer,—Dance oh my muse, and sing to the set !
Lest my Larës accuse me too justly of treason.

Yesterday, while I stood on the step of my door,
Sudden illumined was the East,—red, red, to the pole !

And what heard I afar ? The wind of evening bore
To my ears, the loved airs of Jéna and Arcole.
They've left, the young stoics—won't they take me for bard ?
God bless them—the peasants, and their flag and its blazon !
Eighty-nine, thy proud memory, they know how to guard,
I blessed them while passing,—let fools call it treason.

Your laurel too darkly on a sad forehead lowers,
The laurels resemble cypress-leaves in their gloom,
For me, I would die amid fragrance and flowers,
Strew roses, fresh roses on my bier and my tomb !
Bends my head,—'tis from age,—like a low whistling reed
It pines for free air and the welkin with reason,
Immortal !— I ?—Chut ! Nonsense ! Death went by indeed,—
Pray point out my house,—'twill be friendship not treason.

XII. EPIGRAM—AGAINST LA BRUYÈRE.

Anonymous.

At La Bruyère's election—why
Is there such a hue and cry ?
He's ignorant you say,—well, ceded,
In forty isn't a cypher needed.

XIII. THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Mme. Ackermann.

Sleep for a hundred years held fast
A princess in a lonely wood,
Springs, summers, autumns, winters past
Successive, o'er that solitude.
Time flew : all nature slept around,
The breeze, it seemed, had lost its wing,

And raised, nor in the leaves a sound,
Nor ripple in the brook or spring.
The wild birds had forgot to sing,
And on its green and fragile stem
The rosebud red, half opening
Remained half open,—like a gem,
Through long mysterious years, nor shed
A single leaflet all the time—
What broke this sleep, of magic bred?
You know the tale,—a prince was led
By chance or destiny;—he saw
The Beauty in her sleep sublime,
And then,—and then,—beneath the moon,
Obedient to an unknown law,
He kissed her lips, and broke her swoon.
Blushing, confused, but with a smile
The princess woke in strange surprise:—
Oh strange illumined picture-scroll
Born of some poet's idle mood!
We see thee daily with our eyes,
Nor deem we see thee all the while:
Love is the wakening prince; the Soul
The Sleeping Beauty of the wood.

XIV. SONNET.

Joachim du Bellay.

Happy is he, who, like the Ithacan sage
Or the brave hero of the golden fleece,
Having far travelled, finds his troubles cease,
Amidst his own, in ripe-experienced age.
When shall I turn again to life's first page?
From the world's tumult when obtain release?
And greet the village, and the home of Peace
Where sweet affections quell each passion's rage?

Dearer to me that home my grandsires built,
Than Roman palaces with pillars brave,
Dearer those roofs of slate than marble gilt,
Dearer my Loire than Tiber's sacred wave,
Dearer my Lyré than the Palatine,
And oh how dear, thou climate Angevine !

XV. EPIGRAM—AGAINST MAUPOU.

Anonymous.

Louis wished to be like Titus,
Maupou,—just the opposite,
To jeer his failure, would delight us,
But truth alas ! is requisite.
He never had to mourn and say,—
No evil have I done to-day.

XVI. SONNET.

Paul Scarron.

Sublime memorials of human pride,
Pyramids and tombs, of which the structures vast,
Witness that Art in glorious ages past
With Nature for the mastery boldly vied ;
Old ruined palaces where the Roman tried
His utmost genius, that his work might last ;
Colisëum where to lions men were cast
And gladiators bravely fought and died ;
Proud monuments all of every age and clime,
Ye are demolished, or are crumbling down
Under the look of the Destroyer, Time.
Should I then murmur that beneath his frown

After two years, well measured, chime by chime,
Out at the elbows is my dressing gown ?

XVII. TO A CERTAIN MARCHIONESS.

Pierre Corneille.

Sweet Marchioness,—if on my face
Some wrinkles stamped by time appear,
Remember, he shall also trace
His marks on thine, ere long, and fear.

Ah me ! What malice years oppose
To lovely things ; they deck thee now,
But they shall wither all thy rose
As surely as they graved my brow !

The same smooth course the planets roll
That regulate my days and thine,
They saw me young in look and soul,
And they shall see thee, too, decline.

But yet a difference I claim !
I know the spells that conquer Time,
And these may onward bear a name
From age to age, and clime to clime.

Thou hast the beauty men adore,
But beauty is a fleeting dower,
It's reign of triumph soon is o'er,—
Not so this scorned but magic power.

Mild are those eyes ; I love their light ;
Is there no means to make them beam
A thousand years, as soft and bright ?
There is, or else I fondly dream.

Some credit, a new race must give
To praises flowing from my pen,
As I shall paint thee, thou shalt live
For ages, in the eyes of men!

Think hereupon,—fair Marchioness,
And though old age may scare the gay,
Deem not kind words that cheer and bless
Upon me wholly thrown away.

XVIII. THE YOUNG GIRL.

Charles Nodier.

She was lovely indeed,—at the dawn of the day,
When her plainness of dress set a foil to her grace,
As her labyrinths of flowers and her bees to survey,
She glided about in the old garden-place.

She was lovely, more lovely, at eve, in the ball,
When the light joyed to rest on her forehead's expanse,
As decked with blue sapphires, and roses, 'mid all,
She whirled like a sylph in the maze of the dance.

She was lovelier yet;—more lovely by far,
When the night-wind filled out the folds of her veil,
In the silence returning, by the beams of a star,
What a rapture it was, such a vision to hail!

She was lovely indeed—and what was her crown?
A hope vague and soft that embellished each day;
Love to perfect her seemed loth to come down,—
Peace!—There's her hearse passing by on its way.

XIX.

THE LOST PATH.

TO A. M. DAUBIGNY.

André Lemoyne.

I know a valley in the depth of woods,
  Where spreads the moss its velvet carpet green,
The ringdoves murmur 'mid its solitudes,
  Drunk with perfume exhaled by flowers unseen.

High beeches form of leaves a lofty dome
  That intercepts the entrance of the sun,
Beneath, the timid roebucks love to roam,
  Safe from the hunter in the twilight dun.

There, periwinkles in dark nooks delight,
  Blue myosotis bare their hearts of gold,
And by a crystal pool, her roses white
  A nymphæa bends, their picture to behold.

Hushed are the echoes in a sleep profound,
  A footfall might awake them, Fancy fears,
No deeper silence reigned where magic-bound
  The Sleeping Beauty dreamed a hundred years.

Once,—only once, I saw the happy place,
  'Twas in the glory of my twentieth May,
Led by a fairy, full of love and grace;
  Alone, since then, I have not found the way.

XX.

THE OXEN.

Pierre Dupont.

I've two great oxen in my stable,
Two great white oxen marked with red,
The plough is made of wood of maple,
The goad of holly hard as lead.
Thanks to my oxen; see my plain
In summer like a sea of gold!

More money in a week they gain,
Than what they cost by twenty fold.
Should I be forced to sell them out
I'll hang myself, without a doubt;
I love my wife, and well my Jeanne I cherish,
But let her die, before my favourites perish.

See the lovely pair together!
How deep they plough, how straight they trace!
Rain, and sleet, and stormy weather,
Cold and heat, alike they face!
When I make them halt to drink
From their nostrils bursts a vapour!
And sometimes small birds white and pink
Settle on ebon horns that taper!
Should I be forced to sell them out
I'll hang myself, without a doubt;
I love my wife, and well my Jeanne I cherish,
But let her die, before my favourites perish.

Strong they are as mills, or presses,
Lamb-like gentle—free from vice,
At markets—oh, what pats, caresses!
And then the question—"what's their price?"
Men want to lead them to the King,
I pledge His Majesty in wine,
But sell them—that's a different thing!
I will not sell them,—they are mine.
Should I be forced to sell them out,
I'll hang myself, without a doubt;
I love my wife, and well my Jeanne I cherish,
But let her die, before my favourites perish.

When our daughter shall have grown,
If the Prince desire her hand,
I shall give him all I own,
House and silver, goods and land;
But if for dowry he should pray
The oxen white and red,—good lack!

My daugther throw that crown away,
Lead, lead the cattle homeward back !
Should I be forced to sell them out,
I'll hang myself, without a doubt;
I love my wife, and well my Jeanne I cherish,
But let her die, before my favourites perish.

XXI.

COLINETTE.

Anonymous.

Colinette,—that was her name,—
In a village lived obscure,
Where in childhood's morning pure,
Once, at harvest-time, I came ;
A little girl and schoolboy met,
That was all our history,
She knew not then that death was nigh,
Poor dear Colinette.

When we ran about together
In the lanes and meadows green,
A breathless joy lit up her mien,
And mine was bright as sunny weather.
A chaffinch on the trees,—our pet,
First hailed our child-love with his strain,
And bush and brake burst forth amain,
Poor dear Colinette.

This mossy seat, whereon I sigh,
Beheld my parting with the child,
My soul that eve with grief was wild,
I loved her without knowing why.
With tears half-hid mine eyes were wet,
I took her hand, and said, " my dear,
Adieu, until another year; "
Poor dear Colinette.

A story common, old and stale!
And yet such narratives unseal
Fountains of pity, while we feel
The anguish of creation's wail.
For me, my sun of life is set.
Beauties display their charms in vain,
Coquettes with me but lose their pain,
Poor dear Colinette.

XXII. THE POET'S APOLOGY FOR HIS SHORT POEMS.

Nicolas Martin.

Why Poet, so brief is your lay?
—Ask rather, as more opportune,
Why love flies so swiftly away
And wither the roses so soon!

You love a rich chain-work of gold
Set with pearls, that flash on the view,
I love—oh, much more, to behold
A drop small and humble of dew.

Resplendent with stars are the skies,
But their glory inspires me with fear,
Far dearer to me are bright eyes
In whose depths there trembles a tear.

XXIII. YOUNG AND OLD.

Nicolas Martin.

Thou mountest joyous up in life,
And I descend with forehead bent,
Thou wheelest eager for the strife,
And I retire with banner rent;
Thy future has an ample scope,

How fair the distance seems to thee !
Not opulent am I in hope,
But rich, most rich in memory.

Stoop down, young friend—behold a rose,
Love is its name, ' tis thine by right ;
There's nought for me—the shadows close,
An open grave is in my sight.
All things have turns. The night's dull gloom
Morn's ruddy streak must chase away,
One flower must shed its last perfume,
And one must spring to hail the day.

XXIV. THE GRAND PINT.

Auguste de Châtillon.

Round the Grand Pint when rough winds moan,
And make the sign-board creak and groan
In frosty weather,
A huge log in the kitchen burns,
And there the stranger's eye discerns
Friends met together ;
An old Dutch picture !—cheek by jowl,
Gosling and turkey, duck and fowl
The turnspit garnish !
And then perchance the sun darts in,
To gild the pots and pans of tin,
And add the varnish.

Good cheer and noise and merry song,
Shorten the hour when hours are long,
The wine flows steady,
And if one ever asks mine host,
Complaisant always at his post,
Is dinner ready ?
"Ready ?"—He cries, and low he bows,
"We're always ready in this house,
Though it be humble,

The best of all things at a word !
And never, never have I heard
A patron grumble."

I come, salute and mount ;—up springs
A table laid as if for kings !
The glasses glitter !
Where are my friends ?—The hard, hard frost
Has bound the road in distance lost,—
The cold is bitter ;—
Let me behold the hazy plains,—
The curtains part ; the crystal panes
Show Frost-king's traces,
Lo ! Mountains, lakes, and cypress-trees,
And bending flowers !—but idly, these
My hand effaces.

Ah ! Life is rude and hard to bear,
We bend with weight of years and care,
Whence comfort borrow ?
At the Grand Pint, all laugh at all,
With merriment resounds the hall,
Adieu to sorrow !
Adieu one instant ;—joy and hope
Color in rose the prospect-scope,
Its darkness brightening,
Awake to mirth ! The hour commands !
It is by blowing on the brands
Flames start like lightning.

Farewell Ennui,—and welcome Wit !
As here with friends well pleased I sit
How swift time passes !
When Friendship, Friendship, is the toast
Brims up the best wine of mine host
We drink full glasses.
Four friends ! And shall it aye be thus,
Hand linked in hand,—one heart in us ?
No ! Death may scatter.

But should one die,—we shall be three,
Then two perchance,—then one,—Ah me!
And then,—no matter.

XXV. ROMANCE OF NINA.

Charles Guillaume Etienne.

When back the well-loved shall return
To her who pines though once so dear,
The Spring from its abundant urn
Shall scatter blossoms far and near.
I watch, I wait;—in vain, in vain,
The loved and lost comes not again.

Ye birds far sweeter shall ye sing
When ye shall catch his tender tone;
Then haste the well-loved back to bring,
He'll teach ye songs of love alone.
I watch, I wait;—in vain, in vain,
The loved and lost comes not again.

O echo whose repose I mar
With my regrets and mournful cries,
He comes,—I hear his voice afar,
Or is it thine that thus replies?
Peace! hark he calls! in vain, in vain,
The loved and lost comes not again.

A.

XXVI. DORMEZ, DORMEZ.

Amédée de Beauplan.

Here shall no cares molest,
The place seems hallowed and blest,
And invites thee awhile to rest;
May the voice of the waters be,

With Philomel's, thy lullaby :
Sleep, my darling, sleep,
I shall wake a watch to keep,—
Sleep, oh sleep, I shall wake a watch to keep.

In the midst of these forests vast,
If the shadows the thick trees cast,
Trouble thy peace with the past,
Chase that funereal fear,
Think that thy friend is near ;
Sleep, my darling, sleep,
I shall wake a watch to keep.

Softly thine eyelids close,
More low,—more slow,—my music flows,
Enjoy a sweet repose !
Then waken from a charming dream,
With morning's earliest gleam.
Sleep, my darling, sleep,
I shall wake a watch to keep.

XXVII. THE BUTTERFLY.

Xavier De Maistre.

Thou dweller of the ethereal plain,
Beloved and brilliant butterfly !
How in this dungeon where I sigh,
Could'st thou admittance gain ?
Scarce ever on these frightful walls,
Across the bars, one ray of light
Steals to dispel the long, long night
That in its cheerlessness appals.

2.

Hast thou from Nature, wise and great,
Received a heart to friendship prone ?
By pity hither art thou drawn
To share the sorrows of my fate ?

Thy very presence charms my pain,
No longer bleeds the wound that bled,
The hope extinct, or all but dead,
Is brought by thee to life again.

3.

Sweet ornament on Nature's sheen!
Recall her loveliness to me,
And speak, oh speak of liberty,
Of waters, flowers, and foliage green;
Speak of the torrent's dreadful voice,
Of lakes profound, of cooling shades,
And of the murmur in the glades,
When winds 'mid dripping leaves rejoice.

4.

Hast thou beheld the roses blow?
Hast thou amongst them lovers met?
Of spring the tidings let me get,
And give me news of morns-a-glow.
Tell me, if in the forest gloom,
Thou heard'st thy friend the nightingale
Repeat her joyous notes, or wail,
To flowers that listen as they bloom.

5.

Along these sombre humid halls
For forest flowers thou search'st in vain;
Here captives register their pain,
And trace their sorrows on the walls;
A living grave, deep under ground,
Unvisited by breeze or ray;
Here chains assert their ruthless sway,
And groanings are the only sound.

6.

Gay darling of the meadows—go,
My prison is no place for thee!
Short-lived but freest of the free,
Enjoy the blessings as they flow;

Out of this place of endless sighs !
Where life is one long torment still !
And then, no chains may bind thy will,
No walls enclose thee but the skies.

7.

Perchance some day while fluttering glad
In some sequestered lone retreat,
Thou shalt two playful children meet,
Beside a mother pale and sad ;
Ah then ! Console that mother meek,
And tell her all, yes all I feel,—
But how should'st thou my heart reveal,
Alas ! I know thou canst not speak !

8.

Display thy richly gilded wings
At least before the children's eyes,
And in their pastimes them surprise,
Wheeling around in glittering rings.
Soon shall they follow thee in chase,
With shouts—" 'Tis here—'tis there—'tis gone !"
From flower to flower allure them on,
Until thou lead'st them to this place.

9.

Their mother then will surely come,
Their sad companion while they play,
Attract them with thy movements gay,
And cheer them all the way from home.
Ah me ! What hopes unconscious start !
They come— they come—away my fears !
Who knows but childhood's tender tears,
May melt the gaoler's iron heart !

10.

Yes—to the faithful, faithful bride,
The tender husband shall be given,
The bars asunder shall be riven,
The brazen gates stand open wide.

But ah, great Lord ! What do I say ?
This clanking chain dispels my dream;
The butterfly—was but a gleam,
Behold,—it flutters far away !

G.

XXVIII. ON THE FIRST PAGE OF AN ALBUM BELONGING TO HIS FRIEND AUGUSTE BRESSIER.

Emile Deschamps.

In this album,—bright and blank,
You give the first page up to me,
I accept the solemn rank ;
Why not ? The drum and fife, I see,
March ' fore the colonel every where ;
Choir-boys and beadles on the ways,
Precede the priests with hoary hair ;
Cheap wines are served on gala-days
Before the costly wines of Spain,
Guests drink,—nor of the rule complain ;
And all museums take good care
In entrance vestibules to place
The daubs that give us stare for stare,
While halls far in the Raphaels grace.
Isn't this the law of Holy Writ,
The first as last must choose to sit ?
When worlds were made from unshaped clay,
Was not this order followed too ?
Who runs may read, is all I say :
First minerals of every hue,
Then flowers, the mirrors of the sun,
Then animals that have no soul,
Then man in God's own image bright,
And then when all this work was done,

The crown and glory of the whole—
Fair woman in her robe of light.

And now, behold, I make an end,
With just this prelude on my lyre,
You know the reason why, my friend,
I am the tuner,—to retire
When Rossinis throng in, to play ;—
But if my spirit thus draw back
For fear of a degrading fall
From this high tourney of the Muse,
Beside the gate I stand for aye,—
Nor deem me in affection slack ;
In friendship's race,—" come one, come all, "
No gauntlet thrown will I refuse.—
My challenge here, is proud and high,
Who loves you more ? Dares none reply ?

XXIX. SONNET——THE GRAVE-DIGGER.

Joséphin Soulary.

With every human child, an elf or fay
Is born, who plies the sexton's merry trade,
And digs beneath incessant, with a spade,
A grave where tumble must the man one day.
Know you your elf ? Dark, hideous, they say,
He is at times, one shivers at his shade ;
Mine own has looks so gentle, that I made
No terms with him, but gave him all his way.
A bright child, red and white, with lips so sweet !
On,—on he pushes me with his caresses,
Assassin more charming one rarely may meet !
Rogue, hast thou finished ? Despatch,—for time presses,—
A kiss at the last, when the earth-bed is deep !
And lay me on flowers, softly, softly to sleep.

XXX. FANTASY.

Gérard de Nerval.

There is an air for which I'd freely change
All Rossini's, Mozart's, and Weber's spells,
An old, old air, that of some sorrow tells,
Sad, fascinating, endless, weird and strange.

Each time I hear that air, my soul is borne
Back through the vista of two hundred years,
Reigns "Louis Treize,"—and in my sight appears
A hill-side green, where fading sunbeams mourn.

Then suddenly, a noble castle towers,
Brick, with stone fretwork, and red glass that glows,
Girt by a park, through which a river flows,
Bent over by innumerable ferns and flowers.

And then a lady at a window high,
Fair, with dark eyes, in which a tear I trace,
Oh, is it in my dreams I've seen that face?
Or have I ever lived in times gone by?

XXXI. THE MAIDEN AND THE RING-DOVE.

Madame. M. Desbordes—Valmore.

The stir in the garden says, it's going to rain,
Trees shiver, as warned, and expecting the shower,
And thou with book open, who look'st o'er the plain,
Are thy thoughts with the absent and dear at this hour?

Down there,—wings folded,—wet, cowering in shade,
As banished from scenes that she sees with her eyes,
Calls a dove on her mate; her cry fills the glade,
While wistful she looks at the clouds in the skies.

Let it rain: oh hearts lonely and tender that love!
There's so much that revives in the storm and the rain,
Do roses need nothing but bright sunlight above?
They bear and they wait: should ye mourn and complain?

XXXII. MORNING SERENADE.

Victor Hugo.

Still barred thy doors!—The far east glows,
The morning wind blows fresh and free,
Should not the hour that wakes the rose
Awaken also thee?
No longer sleep,
Oh, listen now!
I wait and weep,
But where art thou?

All look for thee, Love, Light, and Song;
Light, in the sky deep red above,
Song, in the lark of pinion strong,
And in my heart, true Love.
No longer sleep,
Oh, listen now!
I wait and weep,
But where art thou?

Apart we miss our nature's goal,
Why strive to cheat our destinies?
Was not my love made for thy soul?
Thy beauty for mine eyes?
No longer sleep,
Oh, listen now!
I wait and weep,
But where art thou?

XXXIII. CHANSON.

Victor Hugo.

If there be a charming sward
By dewdrops always prest,
Where through all seasons fairies guard
Flowers by bees carest,
Where one may gather day and night,
Honeysuckle, jasmin, lily white,
I fain of it would make a site
For thy foot to rest.

If there be a loving heart
Where Honour's throne is drest,
Loyal and true in every part,
That changes ne'er molest,
Eager to run its noble race,
Intent to do some work of grace,
I fain of it would make a place
For thy brow to rest.

And if there be of love a dream
Rose-scented as the west,
Which shows each time it comes—a gleam,—
A something sweet and blest,—
A dream of which heaven is the pole,
A dream that mingles soul with soul,
I fain of it would make the goal
Where thy mind should rest.

A.

XXXIV. THE MEMORIES OF THE PEOPLE.

Béranger.

In the hut men shall talk of his glory,
With pride, not unmingled with tears;

And the roof shall not ring with a story
But that grand one, for fifty long years.
There villagers in evenings cold,
Shall haply beg some gossip old,
By stories of a former day,
To wile the livelong hours away.
"Some say that he has done us wrong,
But the people love him yet ;
Mother, sing of him a song,
We love him though his sun be set."

"My children, he passed through this village,
With kings not a few in his train ;
I was young, and the house and the tillage
Was learning to manage with pain.
I clambered up a little hill
To see him pass, and stood quite still.
The well-known little hat he wore,
His grey coat marks of travèl bore.
I felt an awe as he drew near,
He smiled the fear to view ;
'Good day, good day,' he cried, 'my dear.' "
"Mother, he spoke to you !"

"One day, a year after, in winter
To Paris on business I came,
I saw him again the bright centre
Of a court, in the old Notre Dame.
Every heart was there content,
Every eye was on him bent,
All cried, 'What a glorious day,
God protect thee thus alway !'
That God had blessed him with a son,—
He smiled, such gracious smiles are few,
My heart, the heart of all it won."
"Oh mother what a day for you !"

"In the days when our country to strangers
Was given for a spoil and a prey,

It was he, who despising all dangers,
Upheld us, and kept them at bay.
An eve like this, when day was o'er,
I heard a knocking at the door,
I opened ;—good God ! it was he,
With weary escort sad to see.
He sat upon this very seat,
'Ah fearful war ;' he said."
"Mother it makes our hearts to beat,
To think he here has stayed."

" 'I am hungry ;' he cried, and quick tripping,
The ale and the brown bread I place ;
He dried all his clothes, that were dripping,
And he slept by the fire for a space.
Awaking up he saw my tears,—
'Hope on,' he cried, 'and have no fears ;
Misfortunes have come,—it is chance :
To Paris, avenger of France
I hasten,'—he said and he passed.
This wine-cup, 'twas his, that I fill,
A treasure to keep to the last."
"Oh mother keep that wine-cup still."

" It is here. But oh, where is our warrior ?
The wise, and the brave, and the true !
On a rock, with the sea for a barrier,
Broken-hearted he pined, and for you.
He whom the father Pope had crowned,
Deserted, exiled, and dethroned !
Long, long the tale was disbelieved,
' He'll come again ' some said who grieved.
But when the truth was clearly known
That on the rock he dying lay,
My grief, the grief of France was shown."
" God bless thee, mother !—Well-a-day. "

XXXV. THE LEAF.

Antoine Vincent Arnault.

Detached from thy stalk,
Leaf yellow and dry,
Where goest thou amain ?
The tempest's fierce shock
Struck the oak proud and high,
And I struggled in vain.
Since then,—the sad day !
Winds changeful and rude
Transport me about,
Over mountains,—away,
And o'er valley and wood.
Hark ! their whistle rings out !
I go where they lead,
I fear not, nor heed,
Nor ever complain.
The rose too must go,
And the laurel, I know,
And all things below.
Then why should I strain,
Ah me ! to remain ?

XXXVI. LOVE'S CATECHISM.

Anonymous.

Say what is love ? The word is not
An empty sound, a fleeting breath ;
Love means two souls with but one thought,
Two hearts that throb like one, till death.

Whence comes this Love ? We little know ;
His will o'errides all let or stay :
And where goes he ? Nay, ask not so ;
He is not Love if he go away.

And what is Love, the truest, purest ?
The Love that breathes but in his choice :
And what is Love, the strongest, surest ?
The Love that makes no boast or noise.

And how does Love increase his riches ?
He gives, and no reward he seeks :
And how speaks he when he bewitches ?
Love simply loves, and never speaks.

XXXVII. ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG GIRL.

Evariste Desforges de Parny.

Though childhood's ways were past and gone,
More innocent no child could be,
Though grace in every feature shone,
Her maiden heart was fancy free.

A few more months, or haply days,
And Love would blossom,—so we thought,
As lifts in April's genial rays
The rose its clusters richly wrought.

But God had destined otherwise,
And so she gently fell asleep,
A creature of the starry skies,
Too lovely for the earth to keep.

She died in earliest womanhood ;
Thus dies, and leaves behind no trace,
A bird's song in a leafy wood,—
Thus melts a sweet smile from a face.

XXXVIII. MY NORMANDY.

Frédéric Bérat.

When all things are to hope new-born,
And far the winter flies away,
And on our well-loved France, each morn
The sun returns with kindlier ray,
When nature blooms on hill and plain,
And swallows are once more in sight,
I visit Normandy again
Where first these eyes beheld the light.

I've seen the hills of Switzerland,
Its châlets, and its glaciers drear,
I've seen Italia's sky and strand,
And heard, entranced, the gondolier,
But while I hailed each foreign spot,
I murmured to myself;—on earth
A lovelier land existeth not
Than Normandy that gave me birth.

There is an age, alas! in life,
When every idle dream must end,
An age of introspection, rife
With memories that cross and blend.
When such an age arrives for me,
And folds her wing, my Muse, to rest,
May I behold my Normandy,
The favoured land I love the best.

XXXIX SONNET—DEUS EX MACHINA.

Joséphin Soulary.

I love the park with its perspectives long
Deluged with fragrance and sweet sound and light,
Where in serenity pass—aerial,—bright,
The tripping Hours that shun the noisy throng.

I love the book of Poesy and Song,
  Whence bursts heart-music with resistless might,—
  What skylark ere attained the empyreal height
Nor summoned up its fellows ! Love is strong.
But if beneath the boughs of emerald hue,
  Or in the printed dream of matchless grace,
Like a vain peacock sudden strut to view
  Owner or author, all the charms efface,
Adieu fair prospect, and high thought adieu !
Nothing but Art remains, where was the True.

XL. GATHER THE ROSEBUDS WHILE YE MAY.

Anonymous.

Said the mother Good-Weather,
  To her girls as she parted,
Now be happy together
  As ye dance merry-hearted ;
Know, sweet flowers of delight,
  Born in spring like the rose,
In summer fade quite,—
  And in winter it snows.
At fifteen is the chance
For such as would dance.

At twenty I thought
  Love was most charming,
But in his net caught,
  My case was alarming.
A tyrant is Love,
  And he holds us while dying,
As the hawk holds the dove,
  'Tis all sighing and crying.
At fifteen is the chance,
For such as would dance.

Amusement and Laughter
  Reigned at my marriage,

But I learned soon after
My bliss to disparage.
With a husband oft grumbling,
And imps howling free,—
'Twas bewildering and humbling,
Could the dance then suit me ?
At fifteen is the chance,
For such as would dance.

Time made me, alas !
An old grandmother,
Things once at that pass
All pleasure's a bother.
One coughs often in talking,
One reclines in a chair,
One trembles in walking,
One's partner is Care.
At fifteen is the chance
For such as would dance.

XLI. THE GRANDMOTHER.

Victor Hugo.

"Sleep'st thou ? Awaken mother of our mother !
We love thee—thee alone—we have no other !
In sleeping thy lips moved, we've seen this often,
For thy sleep was a prayer,—oh relent and soften !
But this evening thou seemest the Madona of stone,
And though thou art present, we feel all alone.

Why bend'st thou thy forehead lower than ever ?
What wrong have we done, that thou claspest us never ?
See ! the lamp flickers, the hearth sparkles as dying,
If thou speakest no more, and art deaf to our crying—
The fire that we feed now, and the lamp that we cherish,
And we two thy loved ones,—all, all shall perish.

Thou shalt find us both dead, by the lamp without light,
And what wilt thou do, when thou meetest that sight ?
Thy children, in turn, shall be deaf to thy calling,
To bring us to life, thou then shalt be falling
On thy knees to thy Saints,—but long will it be,
Yea, long must thou clasp us, ere they give us to thee.

Oh shew us thy Bible, and the pictures we love,
The Saints on their knees, the skies fretted above,
The child Jesus, the manger, the oxen, the kings
With their gold, and their spices, and their rich offerings,
And make us read, as we can, in this Latin so odd,
Which we like (though 'tis hard) for it tells us of God.

Mother ! Alas ! the light wanes by degrees,
The shadows dance round, while we bend on our knees,
The spirits, perhaps, are floating around,
Oh wake from thy slumber,—oh breathe but a sound !
Thou who gavest courage—wouldst *thou* affrighten ?
The embers like eyes in the gray ashes lighten.

God ! How these hands are cold ! Ope thine eyes,—of late
Thou spakest of our world,—our trial-state,
And of heaven, and of the tomb, and of the fleeting life,
And of death,—the last, last agony and strife ;
What then is death ? Oh tell us, mother dear,
Alas ! Thou answerest not,—this silence kills with fear."

Their sobbing voices long disturbed the night,
At length the fresh spring dawn appeared with light,
The steeple rang its melancholy chime
From hour to hour,—but not till evening time,
Did a lone traveller, through the doorway see
The mother, and the Book, and the children at her knee.

XLII. MY VILLAGE.

Gensoul.

Oh fair sky of my native land,
How much I miss thee here!
And thee, oh home—oh sweet retreat!
I ever held so dear.
Canst thou not, Sun, that openest now
The summer's treasures free,
Give back to me my sky and home,
My life and gaiety?

Too common is the error sad
My reason that betrayed,
I dreamt of fortune and a name,
And from my country strayed;
By sad experience wiser grown,
With softer heart to-day,
My own dear village now I seek
And my first friend, far away.

What calls me to that happy spot?
Why should I thither fare?
My mother slumbers there in peace,
And friendship waits me there.
Oh pleasant thoughts! like mighty charms,
My sadness lull to rest,
Dry up the tears that rise unbid,
And calm my heaving breast.

As an exotic fragile bud
In some sad foreign coast,
Bends mourning on its feeble stalk
Beneath a heavy frost,
Thus in my youth,—alas! I bow,
As feeble as the flower,
But knowing in the grave is peace,
I welcome yet the hour.

An exile from my earliest prime
Benumbed and chilled with cold,
I long to warm myself again,
Beside the hearth of old.
Arise each day—my native land,
In memory's longing eye !
In thee began my course of life,
In thee I wish to die.

A.

XLIII. THE MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY.

Anonymous.

Thou so good, O ! thou so perfect,
Who lovest us with so much love,
Mamma with joy we hail thy birthday,
Day all other days above.
In exchange of all our presents,
Of our songs composed for thee,
Of our field-flowers and our roses,
Give us kisses tenderly.

For thee, each day, O ! darling mother,
We lift our voices to the Lord ;
But in prayer for thee this morning,
More fervently have we adored.
God will hear it; on thy pathway,
He will such rich blessings spread,
So much calm, O ! mother cherished,
That thou tears shalt never shed.

Then, to please thee, in our duties,
We shall try to do our best,
Never lift our heads while praying
Just before we go to rest.

Never make a noise or tumult,
When thou bidd'st us quiet be,
And the loudest shall be silent
At a single sign from thee.

Embrace us then O! dearest mother,
Press us well upon thy heart,
Our place accustomed, now and ever,
In joys, and when those joys depart.
O! what is there so good or precious
As a gentle mother's love!
On this earth, the only treasure
Sent us from the heavens above.

A.

XLIV. DOST THOU REMEMBER MARY.

Philippe Dumanoir.

Dost thou remember, Mary,
Our childhood on the green,
Our gay sports in the meadows,
I then was but fifteen.
The dance on grass, like velvet,—
It cheered our leisure hours,
That time hath past for ever,
The time of joy and flowers.

Dost thou remember, dearest,
The evening in the glen,
When first thou saidst, "I love thee!"
I was but twenty then.
Both happy, both in blushes,
Ah day! all days above,
That time hath past for ever,
The thrilling time of love.

Dost thou remember, Mary,
The war-time and thy fear,
When I joined my country's banners,
'Twas in my thirtieth year.
The echoes of the trumpet,
Made soldiers of us all,
That time I now regret too,
And would e'en that recall.

Dost thou remember, loveliest,
The ties that bound thee fast,
The holiest ties,—a mother's,
When my thirtieth year had past;
The tumult of that revel,
Still rings within my heart;
A happy time—Life's autumn,
Ah! why should it depart?

Whilst thus I sigh, my Mary,
Thine eyes are bending down;
Afraid they seem to tell me,
That our best of days have flown.
My lips in vain lament them,
But though the zest be o'er,
To call them back is pleasure,
Those days that are no more.

XLV. THE CAPTIVE TO THE SWALLOWS.

Béranger.

A soldier-captive by the Maure,
Who bent beneath his heavy chain,
Welcomed the swallows from afar,—
'O birds! I see you once again,
Foes of the winter, high ye wheel,
Hope follows in your track e'en here,

From well-loved France ye come, reveal
All that ye know of my country dear.

'For three long years I've sighed and pined
For some remembrance from the spot,
Where dawned upon my infant mind
Sweet visions of a happy lot.
Under fresh lilacs flows the rill
By which our humble cottage stands,
O speak of it,—I love it still,
Though fettered here in iron bands.

'Who knows, but some of ye were born
Upon the roof, beneath whose shade
I first beheld the light of morn,
And by the gentlest mother played.
My mother! to her last sad hour,
She waited for my foot-fall's sound,
Then withered like a storm-crushed flower;
Speak of her love, while wheeling round.

'Speak of them all, the loved, the lost,
My sister, is she married now?
And have they e'er your wanderings crost
That were my playmates long ago?
Of all the friends that came of yore
With me, to win a soldier's praise,
How many have beheld once more
The cherished scenes of earlier days?

'Who live there yet? and who have died?
O speak, dear birds, for ye must know,—
Who slumber happy side by side?
And who, as exiles, live in woe?
My country's birds, your tidings tell,
As high ye circle in the air,
Though never heart for me may swell
Nor ever rise the mother's prayer.'

A.

XLVI. EPIGRAM.—TO A TAILOR.

Bardou.

Robin—thou art rich as Crœsus,
Wherefore, wherefore shouldst thou fleece us ?
Make a bargain with a poet,
He loves thee,—come, let him show it,—
Say wouldst thou in his pages shine ?
Then only blot him out of thine.

XLVII. SONNET.

Gérard de Nerval.

EH QUOI ! TOUT EST SENSIBLE !

Pythagore.

Believest thou thyself the sole thinker, O man,
In a world full of life ? Thine is thy force,
Thou hast free will, and open is thy course,
But not for thee to grasp the general plan !
In air, i' the flower, in the dull metal scan
A soul untainted, and without remorse,
Of love a centre, holy as its source,
All sentient,—all,—thou only in the van !
Hush ! In the blind wall faces are that peer !
Matter is hallowed and stamped with the Word,
To use it for impious purposes, fear !
A God dwells in all unseen and unheard,
Like an embryo eye, a blossom unblown,
A Spirit exists unperceived in the stone.

XLVIII. EPIGRAM.

Barraton.

" Ushers keep silence in the court,
To judge a law-suit is no sport."

Said a President as he nudged
A colleague,—" Not a single word,
Of the ten cases have we heard
That have already been adjudged."

XLIX. SONNET.—THE BROKEN BELL.

Charles Baudelaire.

'Tis bitter-sweet on winter nights, to note,
Beside the palpitating fire reclined,
The chimes, across the fogs, upon the wind,
Now loud, now low, now near and now remote.
What recollections on that music float!
Blessed the bell that through the darkness blind
Sends honest greetings, consolations kind,
And solemn warnings from its lusty throat.
'Tis like a wakeful soldier,—mine, alas!
The soul-bell in me, can but give one cry,
Like that, a wounded soldier,—o'er whom pass
Riders and horses, and around whom lie
The dead and dying in a tangled mass—
Utters, unable or to move or die.

L. THE FARMER'S WIFE.

NEW YEAR'S PRESENT TO MADAME G. * * *

Hégésippe Moreau.

Love—Honour—to the farmer's wife!
So pretty and so kind!
A wild bird that delights to live
In flowers and moss enshrined!
Old vagabond and orphan child,
That need a fork and knife,

May you, by good luck, come across,
The farm and farmer's wife!

The empty stool beside the hearth
The poor man's is, at sight,
And the great chest of walnut wood
Denies him not his right.
'Twas there one day, I came to sit,
Weary with worldly strife,
One day—then forward, and farewell!
Oh farm and farmer's wife!

My one good day has had its end
Long since, long since, Ah me!
But there is pleasure for me yet
In it's sweet memory.
I shut my eyes,—I see again,
With light the garden rife,
The hedge in flower, the little wood,
The farm and farmer's wife!

If God, as oft our pastor says,
Repays all kindness done
(At random even) to our kind,
My debt He sure must own.
Oh may He fill that vale with flowers,
That home with joy and life,
And ever guard from storms and tears,
The farm and farmer's wife!

In winter may a group of Loves
Around her spindle smile,
Like angels bright in Mary's home,
Her leisure to beguile;
And may they hail with shout and noise
On mimic drum and fife,
A brother dear, to glad each year,
The farm and farmer's wife.

ENVOI.

My little song, now take thy flight !
A feeble offering !
In April nights with fuller praise
The nightingale shall sing.
Oh may her tender song of love,
Scare death, and ill, and strife,
And bring down choicest blessings on
The farm and farmer's wife !

LI. THE LAKE.

A. de Lamartine.

While drifting onwards to the unknown clime,
Through varied scenes we hasten thus away,
May we not ever on the sea of time
Cast anchor for a day ?

Oh Lake ! One year hath hardly run its round,
And near the waves she hoped to see once more,
See me sad-seated, lone, upon this mound,
That was her place before.

Thus didst thou roar of old beneath the rock,
And thus didst dash upon its riven side,
When at her feet here bounding from the shock
The foam fell sparkling wide.

One eve, rememberest thou that eve so dear,
When nought was heard, the twilight almost gone,
Save oars that plashed in cadence soft and clear
To bear us on and on ?

Sudden sweet accents,—yea, unearthly sweet,
Startled the echoes of the wood and grot,
While wave and wind lay hushed to hear and greet
My Love speak out her thought.

" Oh Time, suspend thy flight! Oh favouring Hours,
" Rest, rest awhile, upon your rapid wings!
" And let us taste the joys that fade like flowers
" The best our short life brings.

" Full many wearied souls thine aid implore,
" Flow on, Oh Time, for them flow swiftly on,
" Take with their days, the cares that press them sore,
" But leave the blest alone."

Oh Time, too jealous,—must a bright day pass,
That now and then bestrews our path with flowers
As swift as one (too common such, alas !)
Which like a dark cloud lowers.

What! must it pass, and be for ever lost!
Fade like a planet in its lofty place ?
Melt like the fairy wreath-work of the frost
And leave behind no trace ?

Eternity! Past! Chaos! sombre Profound!
What becomes of such days engulfed in thy gloom ?
Speak, from thy prison will they e'er be unbound
And come back in their bloom ?

Oh Lake! Mountains silent! Grots! Forests obscure!
Renewed by old Time, or spared lovingly,
Keep, keep enshrined, of that day bright and pure,
At least the memory.

That so, all things,—this lake in calm and storm,
This coast of tracery delicate and brave,
These rocks and firs of sombre tint and form
That hang above the wave,

These fleet-footed zephyrs, that hurry so fast,
These sounds from the shore, by the shore echoed back,
This star of pale silver, that whitens the vast
With its long lustrous track,

These ferns, and these flowers, and these wind-shaken briars,
May say,—as by one common impulse, all moved,
We love,—for in love,—nature lives and respires,
And we know—*they* have loved.

LII. SONNET.

Sainte-Beuve.

Awake in bed, I listened to the rain!
Thought followed thought, like surges fierce and high,
When sudden ran across the clouded sky
The lightning, like a steed with silver mane;
The thunder rattled rapid, in its train,
Earth trembled, as the living wheels drew nigh
The prophet saw of old with dazzled eye,
And prowling lions fled their dens to gain.
But thou my soul as all the heaven was rent,
Felt thy life-current with the clamour warm,
For thou couldst join,—such power to thee was lent,
In the wild concert, and thy part perform,—
Greater as man than every element,
God spake in thee as loud as in the storm.

LIII. S'IL L'AVAIT SU.

Madame M. Desbordes-Valmore.

If he had known,—known what a soul he has wounded!
O heart if thy tears had been seen but to flow,
Or if thou at his step less wildly hadst bounded,
And guarded the power thy deep feeling to show,
He could not,—he could not, so lightly have altered,
Proud to nourish a hope now hurled from its throne,
By a love so profound, he touched, must have faltered,
If he had known.

If he had known, what might be hoped and awaited
From a heart in its candour, deception above,
For mine he had longed, with a joy unabated,
And as he inspired, would have felt also love.
Mine eyes bent down ever, concealed my emotion,
Guessed he nothing from that ? Was't shyness alone ?
A secret like mine was worth search,—and devotion
If he had known.

If I had known,—I,—of the empire he wielded,
Over hearts that lived in the light of his eyes,
As one breathes a pure air,—unconscious, unshielded,
My steps would have sought other countries and skies.
It's too late to talk of love-sign or love-token !
My life was a hope, but the hope now has flown !
Wilt thou say when thou know'st?—"Oh heart I have broken
If I had known !"

LIV. TO A YOUNG POETESS.

Victor de Laprade.

If I were a young girl with a red cheek that blushes
And a poet's proud power,
I'd love better to sing from a nest like the thrush's
Than a prophet's star-tower.
Nought would I reck of the world's thunders that mutter,
Or the winds that thrones hurl,
But to each flower of the summer its name I would utter,
If I were a young girl.

I would dream in the air while the far bells were ringing,
I would laugh like the brook,
The linnet should be my sole master in singing,
The fields verdant my book.
I would there make my choice as in a rich casket,
Each white bud a pearl,

And then deck my lyre with the gems in my basket,
If I were a young girl.

To the weeds in the furrows, drone their songs the cicalas,
To the clouds skylarks call,
To the hearths sing the crickets, ghost-bards to Valhallas,
There are poets for all.
But my work would be better than a pedant's reflections,
For my muse would unfurl,
The dreams of our sisters, their hid hopes, their elections,
If I were a young girl.

But I would give all,—a renown deeply founded,
A whole people's acclaim!
For a word from the heart that I loved and had sounded,
And proved ever the same.
I would dash down my lute, to clasp hands, perhaps nearer
Feel his breath on my curl,—
Oh Genius is great,—but to *me* Love would be dearer,
If I were a young girl.

LV. THE SWALLOWS.

Claris de Florian.

Oh! how I love to see the swallows,
Near my window hovering,
Every year with joyful tidings
Of the advent of the spring.
Same the nests,—and same their story,
Same the lovers gathered there,
Faithful lovers that announce us
Days of sunshine warm and fair.

When the first cold frosty weather
Strips the trees, as old leaves fall,
All the swallows met together
One another twittering call,—

" Let us fly the wind's sharp bluster,
And to warmer climates wing,
True hearts cannot live in winter
But are always with the spring. "

If perchance, a wandering swallow,
Victim of a cruel fate,
By some heartless child made captive
Cannot see her tender mate,
You shall see her die, poor creature!
Of sorrow, love and weariness,
While her partner pines and sickens
Far away, in grief no less.

LVI. CHANSON DE FORTUNIO.

Alfred de Musset.

Whom do I love?—I answer,—nay,—
Nor ask nor blame,
Not for an empire would I say
The fair one's name.

Sing if ye will,—she's far beyond
All women born.
Shall I describe her? She is blonde
As ripened corn.

I do whatever she commands,
I care a straw
For life,—my life is in her hands,
Her will is law.

The pain that springs from silent love,
A love unknown,
Tears—tears this heart that seems above
As cold as stone.

But much, too much I love, to say
Who lights my flame,
I'd rather die and pass away
Than breathe her name.

LVII. OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.

A. de Belloy.

Under an ardent sun a traveller gay,
From a long pilgrimage I was coming back,
Twelve oxen large and slow, along the track
Dragged on the bark, in which I sheltered lay,
Now half asleep, now gazing at the day
Dying upon the red horizon's verge;
Light blent with shade, when in the twilight dim
The landmarks sun-tipped of my journey's end
Appeared far off, as beacons that emerge
Over a sea, through vapours round that swim.
But rough, uneven was the towing road,
And so, nor crack of whip, nor cry could lend
Speed to the oxen staggering with their load.
Sudden a child at play upon the shore
Observed us, laughed, and warning me from far,
Detached the oxen, swiftly, and with grace,
From rope and halter, then triumphant bore
With a gold thread bright-beaming as a star
Onwards the equipage at a wondrous pace
Without the semblance of an effort. "What!"
Cries out a sage,—"no effort, can it be?
Why Hercules himself could do it not.
'Tis a tale idle as the Genie's ring,
When did this happen, and oh! tell me where?"
Dear reader, shall I clear the mystery?
The child was Love, of all magicians, king,
The thread of gold was from my Chloë's hair.

LVIII. TO MY CHILDREN.

SUBJOINED TO A POEM ENTITLED THE CURFEW.

Jules Lefèvre-Deumier.

My dear little children, while softly you sleep,
By your bedside for you a present I keep,
These leaflets in print, where hid like a bee
In the heart of a flower, my soul you may see
Lapped in the shadow delightful of rhyme,—
To you my first-born, grave and lovely Maxime,
Who at six with the wisdom of seven years are blest,
Who con o'er Blue-Beard, Tom-Thumb, and the rest,
But can't grasp very clearly all that you read ; —
And to you Eusebius, an angel indeed,
An angel that totters about as in fetters,
Eighteen months old, not great in belles-lettres
At present, but who, I'm sure, in the skies
Where seraphs must miss your voice and your eyes,
Could read like a doctor, and speak by the day,
But who've lost all your skill it seems on the way ;
To you my darlings both, this present I bring,
Swathed with my love is the poor offering.
Not a gift, after all, for which much may be said,
For this "forget-me-not," upon us, weighs often like lead ;
Still,— when you're grown 'twould be good to discover
If these pages in print are worth their fair cover,
If my couplets too numerous be compact or ill-knitted,
If my style to my theme and my matter be fitted.
It's a long work, but dears, in all labour there's profit,
And children devoted will make the best of it.

Yes, sometimes you will read this cluster of lays,
This silent consoler of my oft bitter days,
And you will read, twice o'er, bits here and there,
And all my aspirations I foresee you'll share ;
The parts wherein I bless the mobile arches
Of woods, resounding with great organ marches

When winds stir up their music in the leaves,
May strike your eye, or where I sing the sheaves,
Or bees that court the wild flowers, or the calm
Of sacred solitude and the silent psalm
Of nature, where my holidays I kept,
Scenes where I've smiled, and oftener, oftener wept.
And you will say like children kind and good,
"These lines, for the time, are not very rude;
The style's rather stiff, out-of-fashion, one may say,
But really such thoughts are not met every-day."

When your mother well versed in legend and tale,
Recounts some adventure and you listen all pale,
How once in the black forest ogres roamed grim,
And roasted their prey in the twilight dim,
Whole flocks at a time—with a wolf—on the spit!
If allusion by chance be made to my wit,
Or my verses neglected,—she will reply,
With some little pride, in her bearing and eye,—
"Be sure my dear children, whate'er critics may say
Such verses are not very common to-day.
What deep philosophy! Ah, what a grace!
Touches how tender and bold interlace!
If this be old, so much worse for our youth,
What, what have they done that's better forsooth?
"The Whaler," "the Circles," "Josaphat," and "the Night,"
Who loves not these pieces is a booby outright.
One eve, I remember that evening well,
Still haunts me his voice distinct as a bell,
He recited "the End of the world"—to a set
Of friends dearly-loved among whom was Soumet;
And *he* took the word up at last—"on my faith,
If the world last, but as long as its death
Is certain to live;—one may well be at ease,"—
And do you wonder that poems like these
Are not read now-a-days? Ah, think my dear boys,
The world is distracted with tumult and noise,

And they never were read, no never, my dears,
Though prompt to raise smiles and melt into tears ;
Ah ! If your father had deigned to desire
The bubble called fame—with his heart and his lyre
How easy for him 'twere"——my children I hope
You'll give all this nonsense freedom and scope,
And errors respect that your mother console,
For love is their source and love is their goal.
This matter affects me, my future is here,
To miss her sweet praise I feel such a fear
That *now* I enjoy it, or fain would at least,
As birds hail before-hand, the first streak in the east.
For deaf is the tomb by its nature ; a word
Said above it, may beneath not be heard.
No matter. Here with you my shade will remain,
And let me arrange the details in my brain ;
The paradise my Muse builds, is near you, my dears,
By the hearth that beholds my pleasures and tears.
When you make up your nests where I'd made mine,
Have the same leisure, and worship the Nine;
I say not, you must my book often read,
No such devotion or penance I need.
But at Val, sometimes, in the eve, when the sky
Looks, sprinkled with stars, like a pall hung on high,
When silver clouds swell out the gold on their sails
And sweep through a sea, where the crescent prevails,
When grows in the dim wood, dark and darker the day,
And the nightingale wakes with her soul-thrilling lay,
When the heads of the flowers bend languishing down
As to sleep, and like folds of marble brown
Winds the fog, round the trunks of the aged trees,
In a drapery dense, unstirred by the breeze,
When glowworms tremble in the blades of the grass,
Like sapphires from heaven dropt by angels that pass ;
And fly hither and thither the wandering lights
Around the marshes, and far over the heights,
Say then my friends,—"Here's the hour of his choice !

In the woods our dear father now used to rejoice,
Roaming about in the darkness at will,
Intent on his thought, pursuing it still,
Or on the watch silent—like a hunter grim,
For it to start forth from its twilight dim.
His traces everywhere have now disappeared,
The branch once so green is blasted and seared,
But it behoves us now at his favourite time
To think of him tenderly, or to read his rhyme."

Speak often of me, my shade, night and day,
Will hover around you though it darken your way;
Love verses that spring from kind hearts like your own,
They are echoes from heaven, stray beams from the throne;
While I slumber in earth whisper gently of me—
"His tune was old Virgil's though far lower his key.
If the world never thought so, the reason is clear,
Impatient, it never deigned even to hear;
But the less it talks of him, the more should we raise
Around his dear name an incense of praise.
As his loved ones, we two, should treasure his story,
As his loved ones, we two, should give him his glory;
For once we are dead—who, who will awake him,
Bard of a day—the dark night will o'ertake him."
This, this would be, dear ones, my funeral oration,
I shall want, I assure you, no other ovation.
I count upon you, and for this reason my friends
I give you my book. Keep, keep till life ends
This Souvenir. At your breath the verses that sleep
Herein, into vigour and beauty shall leap,
As leap into loveliness sudden the flowers
At zephyr's sweet breath, to bloom through the hours.
I seek not a fleeting renown or a name,
Your memory, my children—there, there is my fame.

LIX. LONELINESS.

A. de Lamartine.

Oft, oft on the mountain in the shade of an oak,
I take, when the sun sets, sad and thoughtful my seat,
The most potent magician would fail to invoke
A picture more changing than the view at my feet.

Here chides the rough streamlet with its waves all in foam,
Then it winds, and is lost in the bushes afar,
There the lake bright and tranquil reflects the blue dome,
Adorned simply and chastely with evening's first star.

On summits the loftiest crowned with woods sombre and high,
Still throws the dim twilight its last lingering ray,
While the car of night's regent mounts slowly the sky
And illumines with silver the horizon's dull grey.

Hark! From the clear-outlined gothic steeple is borne
Solemn, solemn and sweet the rich sound of the bells,
On his pathway, the traveller weary and worn,
Stops to hear the loved concert as faintly it swells.

But a picture like this, in my soul gives no birth
To transport or pleasure, for the halo has fled,
Like a wandering spirit I move on the earth,
And the sun of the living warms never the dead.

From hill to far hill, long, long I carry my view,
From the south to the north, from the dawn to the west,
All the points of the vast circle I run through and through,
And say inly, in *no* place content can I rest.

What care I for palaces, huts, valleys or woods,
Vain objects of their lustre divested and shorn,
Streams, rocks, green forests, and more adored solitudes
One being has left me, and ye all are forlorn!

When the march of the day-god commences or ends,
With an eye quite indifferent I follow his range,
What matters to me whether he mounts or descends
In a dark sky or pure, when the days bring no change ?

Could I follow the sun's course through all his career,
A blank desert,—a void everywhere would I see,
I seek nothing of all he illuminates here,
Visible universe I ask nothing of thee !

But who knows if beyond the far limits of sight,
Where the True Sun lights up other places and skies,
When my body is dust, and my soul clad in white,
What I dream of so much may not flash to mine eyes.

There shall I drink of the clear fountains I want,
There encounter the sisters long-sought, Hope and Love,
Ideal—whose emblems on the earth are but scant,
There, there shall I greet thee for thy home is above.

Why, why can I not, borne on the car of the morn,
Vague object I long for, dart upwards to thee ?
Why linger I still in a forced exile I scorn ?
No bond of affection 'twixt the world is, and me.

The reign of green foliage in the wood is but brief,
Falls the leaf and is whirled by the wind in its play,
Alas ! I resemble but too much the poor leaf ;
Stormy wind of the north, bear oh ! bear me away.

LX. NICE.

Madame Ackermann.

At the foot of the hills see my garden in shelter,
My fig-trees, my home,
The valley ever green, and the sea-waves that welter,
Blue, silvered with foam.

Ah! When first I arrived in this valley enchanted,
The day I recall,
It was after a shipwreck,—life barely was granted,
But I had lost all.

And now since that season of despondence and sorrow,
Spring often has run,
Across meadows that love his wreaths radiant to borrow,
And laugh in the sun.

If no blooms are for me,—in a present that's dreary
And future of ill,
At least, oh! my poor heart, of thy tears thou art weary
And hast learned to be still.

'Mid scents of the orange, where all smiles, I may languish,
And sometimes may sigh,
But I can dream of times loved, and now see without anguish,
The days dawn and die.

LXI. SONNET.—MICHAEL ANGELO.

Auguste Barbier.

How sad was thy look, and thoughtful thy brow,
Brave Michael Angelo, artist in stone!
Tears ne'er wetted thy lids, and never shone
Smiles on thy lips; like Dante stern wert thou!
No milk for thy food, the Muse would allow,
Reared on strong meat, Art was thy love alone.
A threefold career! Sixty years! Unknown
The soft affections as bound by a vow.
Poor Buonarotti! Thy work was thy glory——
To stamp on the marble a grandeur profound!
Mighty,——to strike a deep terror around;
And when it came,—the close of thy story,

Thou wert like an old lion stretched on the ground
With its cloud of a mane dishevelled and hoary.

LXII. THE ROSES OF SAADI.

Madame M. Desbordes-Valmore.

I went early this morning to bring thee fresh roses,
But they were so many,—burst the band that encloses
The flowers I pick daily, and they all flew away ;

Some were whirled by the wind, and some fell in the river,
They seemed for one moment, in its ripples to shiver,
Then they followed the stream, winding on in its play ;

On the waters they gleamed as in ashes gleam embers,
Their sweet fragrance my robe—ah, my robe still remembers,
Respire the remembrance, as it rustles I pray.

LXIII. SOLEIL COUCHANT.

Victor Hugo.

The sun set this evening in dense masses of cloud,
The storm comes tomorrow, then evening, then night,
Then the dawn in her chariot refulgent and proud,
Then the nights, then the days, steps of Time in his flight.

The days shall pass on, rapid as birds on the wing,
O'er the face of the hills, o'er the face of the seas,
O'er rivers of silver, and o'er forests that ring
With a hymn for the dead, chanted low by the breeze.

And the face of the waters, the brow of the mountains
Deep scarred but not shrivelled, and the woods tufted green,
Their youth shall renew ; and the rocks to the fountains
Shall still yield what these yield to the ocean their queen.

But I, day after day, bending lower my head,
Pass, chilled in the sunlight, and soon, soon shall have cast,
In the height of the banquet, my lot with the dead,
Unmissed in the world, joyous, radiant and vast.

LXIV. THE COW.

Victor Hugo.

Before the white farm where o'er the threshold festoon
Wild creepers,—where an old man sits sometimes at noon,
Where numbers of fowl strut and display their red crests,
And the watch-dog their guardian peacefully rests,
Half-attentive to the clear trumpet note of their king,
Resplendent in sunshine as he claps his strong wing,
There stood a cow—chance-brought—on her neck bells jingled,
Superb, enormous, red and white intermingled—
Gentle, tender and patient as a hind to its young,
She had gathered a bright group of children who hung
Under and around her,—village children with teeth
White as marble peeping their red lips underneath
And bushy hair in disorder; fresh and more brown
Than the mossy old walls in the skirts of a town,
Obstreperous,—all calling together with cries
For others much younger to take shares in the prize;
The bands steal without pity though they tremble with fear,
And look furtive around lest the milkmaid appear,
With ruby lips,—lips joyous, that haply cause pain,
With fingers that busy, press again and again,
The full udders transpierced with a thousand small pores,
They draw the sweet nectar amid laughter and roars,
While she the good mother with a skin soft as silk
White and red,—rich laden with her treasure of milk,
Powerful and kind,—the most liberal of givers,
Under their hands is still. Scarce now and then shivers
Her bright side more shaded than the flank of a pard
As they pull. She seems carved in stone massive and hard;

Dreamy, large-eyed, and calm, she desires no release,
But looks vaguely in air,—a grand picture of peace.
Thus Nature,—our refuge, 'gainst the arrows of fate!
Universal Mother, as indulgent as great!
Thus all at once, creatures of every age and rank
Shadow and milk we search, in thine eternal flank;
The mystic and carnal, the wise and foolish come there,
The spirits retiring, and the spirits that dare,
Sages with halos bound, poets with laurels crowned,
All creep under thy breast, or encircle thee round.
And whilst well-nigh famished, with eager joyful cries
From thy source endless, we draw our needed supplies,
Quench our heart's thirst, and ask and obtain what must soon
Form our blood and our soul, as a free gift and boon,
Respire in long waves thy sacred flame and thy light,
From all that greets our ears, or our touch, or our sight—
The leaves and the mountains, the blue sky and green sod,
Thou undistracted and still,—thou dreamest of thy God!

LXV. SONNET—RIMEMBRANZA.

Joséphin Soulary.

Of thy early days, speak, and of all their fresh dreams,
The bright-winged angels who oft wheeled o'er thy nights,
Thy petty big sorrows, and thy childish delights,
Thy illusions,—flowers from the cradle, and gleams,
And the struggles with which a too timid heart teems,
For which Clorinde, more ripe, has quizzed thee, smiling, in fights
Mock-earnest, while she jested at Love, who excites
The star-lights to herald, though they fade in his beams.
Conceal nothing from me of old times,—of the whole,—
I love to recompose thread by thread the bright chain
Which up to the Infinite, makes me follow thy soul,—
Like the miser, I feel, who though rich would still gain,

Who clutches at silver, though in gold he may roll,—
I would hear, rose in hand, of the green bud again.

LXVI. OH DESERT OF THE HEART.

Sainte-Beuve.

Oh Desert of the heart in these long eves,
When Autumn brings our flowerless Winter on,
What a bleak wind across thy wild waste grieves
With hollow murmurs for the dead and gone!
Oh Desert of the heart!

In our fresh youth when all things are new-born,
Before we love, in our impatience, old,
We mourn our fates as though we were forlorn,
Then also how thou seemest vast and cold!
Oh Desert of the heart!

We long for love, we think the heavens are rude,
The future looks all cloud and storm and rain,
And fierce against the barriers that exclude
Our bliss, we strike, but seem to strike in vain,
Oh Desert of the heart!

Illusions! Run, O frank and bounding youth!
There,—at two paces is the bush in flower,
No more the desert—but for age, in sooth,
Is there a white-rose bush, or jasmine bower,
Oh Desert of the heart?

Bitter delays and longings unattained!
Oh say—beyond the sands and folding mountains,
Dim in the distance to our weak eyes strained,
Is there not hid some Vaucluse with its fountains,
Oh Desert of the heart?

LXVII. SEXTINE.

Le comte F. de Gramont.

Soon after the hour when the night's sombre cheek blushes,
In the season of nests, in the advent of flowers,
I entered a thicket of ferns graceful, and rushes,
Not for the shadow, but the strange color that flushes
And trembles on leaves without number, for hours,
While the Sun with Aurora disputes the dew-showers.

My blood in the transit tinged with red the green bowers,
For the tufts of the holly, and the stiff blades of the rushes,
And the thorns, and the brambles, rising upwards like towers,
Had laced a sharp barrier round the home of the flowers,
In the glade, when I came, oh how deep were the blushes!
Flowers,—flowers,—quite a sea,—and a twilight that hushes!

A net-work harmonious, where like music, light gushes
And mixes with shade, o'er the dews witching showers,
Diamond, white pearl, and the opal that flushes
In snow and in gold, and the ruby's deep blushes,
All shimmered, and then filt'ring from the cups of the flowers
Went to streak the green leaves with the rainbow's rich dowers,

It was then that a Fairy stood forth by the bowers,
She seemed to emerge from an oak 'mid the rushes,
That guarded the north of the kingdom of flowers,—
Fixed, fixed were mine eyes, yet virgin of showers,
As she said—"So thou fliest? The world grinds and it crushes
And here, 'mid my workmen, is peace in the bushes.

"My treasures contemplate, as thou sitt'st by these rushes,
With art and at leisure, choose, choose the bright flowers,
Weave thy gay garland, and if the wind fiercely brushes
And flinging clouds o'er the sun, destroy their dew-blushes,
From thy soul them besprinkle with flame and with showers,
And rays everlasting shall dart through the bowers."

I tied ye up then,—oh beloved and chaste flowers!
Nor any have added, lest should fade your rich flushes—
But my Love would not have them, 'twas a waste of my powers,
My blood and my tears through the long-rolling hours
Are the gifts she desires, and so back, 'mid the rushes,
I brought to the Fairy her flowers with their blushes.

Great was my sorrow,—but a sorrow girdled with flowers
Is greater. Lethe,—oblivion,—in darkness still gushes,
But in daylight's rich hues, burst forth the tear-showers.

LXVIII. THE SOLITARY NEST.

Madame M. Desbordes-Valmore.

Go my soul, soar above the dark passing crowd,
Bathe in blue ether like a bird free and proud,
Go, nor return, till face to face thou hast known
The dream,—my bright dream,—unto me sent alone.

I long but for silence,—on that hangs my life,
Isolation and rest—a rest from all strife,
And oh! from my nest unvexed by a sob
To hear the wild pulse of the age round me throb.

The age flows like a river,—on, on, and alas!
It bears on its course like dead sea-weeds,—a mass
Of names soiled with blood, broken vows, wishes vain,
And garlands all torn that shall bloom not again.

Go my soul, soar above the world and the crowd,
Bathe in blue ether like a bird free and proud,
Go, nor return, till face to face thou hast known
The dream,—my bright dream,—unto me sent alone.

LXIX. FALLEN WOMEN.

Victor Hugo.

Oh never insult a woman who falls,
Who knows what a chain the poor soul enthralls!
Who knows how long with hunger she had fought
When the wind of misfortune as a victim her sought!
Who—who has not seen these poor women broken
Cling,—hope to the last, for a word never spoken!
Thus, at the end of a branch shines the rain,
Reflecting the heavens, when the wind comes amain—
Long quivers the drop,—but its struggle is vain.
'Tis over,—howl winds and devils with laughter!
A pearl,—pearl before, 'tis dirt ever after.

The fault lies in us,—in the rich, in their gold!
But say can dirt never pure water enfold?
To make the pure drop come forth from the dust;
And change to a pearl in its splendour august,
Suffices,—a ray of the sun or of love—
Thus all is transformed, thus all soars above.

LXX. LIGHTS.

Louis Bouilhet.

The sage muses and ponders with feelings of sorrow
On this life and its sin,
By a vase with dim light that gleams, gleams till the morrow,
Fed with oil from within.

Crowned with the vervain, hopeful and joyous, and dancing
As if flushed with the wine,
Shakes Hymen his fire-showers, the night sombre entrancing
With a torch of the pine.

Hovers over the feast,—oh, how gracious its motion!
The mild lamp of perfume,
Like a galley of gold that sweeps over the ocean,
Poop on fire in the gloom!

At the foot of the Quirinal, the tavern throws nightly
Its red rays on the lane,
Where cluster low women, brazenfaced and unsightly,
In the cold or the rain.

The fires of the Atrium—sacred fires in a quiver,
Tremble under the gate,
And cause the Penates in the faint light to shiver
By the old antique grate.

The hardy bold sailor who on waters blue-breasted
Drives a furrow of foam,
Has the beacon far-streaming, like a warrior high-crested
That aye points him his home.

Roman gods have their suns their halls spacious to brighten,
Beyond hearing and ken,
But Cæsar the powerful, his dark night to enlighten
Must have torches of men.

He orders, and sudden wrapt in black cerements sepulchral
Steeped in pitch, on the scene,
Come the victims, to light,—torches ghastly and spectral,—
The fair groves of Sabine.

'Mid songs erotic are heard,—or is it a juggle
A wild dream of the brain?
The howls of these torches that with flames fiercely struggle
And that struggle in vain.

Sabine all the while, drives a team foaming and rapid
Through the long avenue,
Or thrums on his lyre, thrums notes common and vapid,
While he smiles at the view.

Smile on, oh ! great Cæsar, though those lights be infernal,
They may serve ends divine,
And when ashes thou art, as fire-banners eternal
They may shine and still shine.

LXXI. A PAGE FROM THE BIBLE.

Arsène Houssaye.

I.

The rural sounds of eve were softly blending—
The fountain's murmur like a magic rhyme,
The bellow of the cattle homeward wending,
The distant steeple's melancholy chime ;

The peasant's shouts that charms from distance borrow,
The greenfinch whirring in its amorous flight,
The cricket's chirp, the night-bird's song of sorrow,
The laugh of girls who beat the linen white.

The breeze scarce stirred the reeds beside the river,
The swallows saw their figures as they flew
In that clear mirror for a moment quiver,
Before they vanished in the clouds from view.

And schoolboys wilder than the winging swallows
Far from the master with his look severe,
Bounded like fawns, to gather weeds, marsh-mallows
And primrose blossoms to the young heart dear.

II.

Along the path now rising and now dipping
Sudden there came, as supple as a reed
A blue-eyed girl, who balanced, lightly tripping
An earthen pitcher,—fair she was indeed !

Her brow was almost veiled, and in its beauty
Bent languid, while the waves of some day-dream

Passed o'er it—but her feet still true to duty
Glided unconscious to the accustomed stream.

The wind upon her shoulders smooth had scattered
Her brown hair with its streaks of shining gold,
A periwinkle—one—her undress flattered,
A rural ornament charming to behold.

Beside the fount from whence the clear stream slanted
Upon a stone she knelt, and looked above;—
And then more joyously the bullfinch chanted
His canticle of sacred, sacred love.

III.

Came by a mendicant,—with no friends loving,
A branch of oak appeared his only friend,
His old frame trembled,—and he looked as moving
Unto a grave that must his journeys end.

Upon the branches of a birch with sadness
His empty wallet carefully he hung,
Then o'er the waters murmuring in their gladness
An eager longing gaze of thirst he flung.

He tried to drink,—his efforts were beguiling,
The girl his trouble saw and came in aid,
Offered her pitcher, and divinely smiling,
"Drink, oh my father, drink," she gently said.

It was a scene of old—my bosom bounded,
Years,—centuries,—seemed back again to roll;
And ere it set, the sun methought had rounded
The girl's pure forehead with an aureole.

LXXII. THE CHILD ON THE SEA-SHORE.

Auguste Vacquerie.

One gets the vertigo—the rock is so steep,
And then on all sides is the wild foaming deep,

Not a sign of human existence,—not a trace :
In this sinister spot where the world disappears,
A little boy, fearless, where every one fears,
Is seated alone,—as the king of the place.

Sole, weak and helpless ;—unwatched by its mother !
The rock and the sea seem to fight with each other,—
If they wished to destroy this child of the isles,
The mount has just to loose a bit of its stone,
The sea to urge forward a breaker alone,
To crush or to whelm,—but the child only smiles.

In truth the high rock that seems heaven to invade
Leans with affection, leans to give him some shade,
And shield him from winds ; and the monstrous ocean
Licks timid his feet. Oh Rock sombre, 'tis right
To change thy high pride—thus, thus to devotion !
And Sea, thou dost wisely to cringe in his sight !

For this little child,—he is Man ! Great on all hands—
He mourns and he suffers, and 'tis he who commands !
Eagle in spirit, the vulture untiring
Gnaws right in his heart,—but he gazes above !
What O Rock is thy height to his genius aspiring ?
What thy unrest O Sea by the side of his love ?

LXXIII. SONNET.—A VISION.

A. de Belloy.

Loving at twelve years age a cousin young
And gaining nothing at the sport but tears,
I said that God who *all things sees and hears*
Shall see me carve, *the forest-boughs among*
Her name to-day. *Over an abyss there clung*
A tree,—I chose it,—and with hopes and fears

Reached its slant summit "Now through all the years"
Said I descending—"shall this token hung
Witness my love,"—but sudden, clothed in white,
A lady fair whom I had never seen
Stood at my side,—"What thou hast done is right,
But in thy heart will nothing low or mean
This love efface or leastwise shade and screen?
Place that love rather, on a pure, safe height!"

LXXIV. CHEVAL ET CAVALIER.

Gustave Nadaud.

My foot is in the stirrup—on!
'Tis time my steed that we were gone,
The daylight wears,
Thy poor, poor master turneth mad,
We must be gone,—the words are sad,—
Who cares!

Fast in a net-work, she had thought,
Of syren love, I had been caught,
And so she hurled
Contemptuous words,—but I am free—
Place, place between her pride and me
The world.

Light were our steps, our spirits gay,
When thus we journeyed day by day
Beneath the firs,
To see the fair in her abode,
Now, we must shun the beaten road
To her's.

How proud she is of all her charms,
False gods I worshipped,—rounded arms,
A colour pale,

A mirrored heaven in dark blue eyes,
A red mouth whence coquettish sighs
Exhale.

My soul has found its wonted pride
And it can scorn, flout, curse, deride,
Beware, oh dove!
And mock no more an eagle proud
That soars, far soars, the thunder-cloud
Above.

O the capricious wicked child!
She loves not and she drives me wild—
She's jealous too,
Forbids all other love within
My heart, as though such love were sin,—
The shrew!

Fly, swiftly fly,—behold the hour,
When she awaits me in her tower,
Fair, fair as spring,—
Her coldness has effaced the past,
Without a tear I fly at last
And sing!

But what is here?—The green, green grass,
The lane obscure,—the house, alas!
Again to-day!
Oh well may steed and rider fret,
That cannot, though they would, forget
The way.

Fly swift oh fly!—Put forth thy pace—
But no; I see—I see her face—
Oh sad relapse!
One last, last farewell let me say—
Tomorrow we shall go our way
Perhaps.

LXXV. LES SAINTES AMITIÉS

Ulric Guttinguer.

To Madame V. P.

I've read in Bourdaloue, a grand discourse
On sacred friendships. The preacher with force
Their danger points out; he sees them with fright
And judges them harshly, but I think he is right;
Boldly he says,—whate'er suffer the soul,
A woman's friendship suspect on the whole.
Though her intentions be ever so pure,
Though in faith she stand fast-rooted and sure,
Fear her, oh fear her, my warning believe,
A woman is always the arch-temptress—Eve.
Unconsciously sometimes,—that I can grant,—
But not the less surely, must she enchant.
Flee from the trust,—blind, denuded of sense,—
In sentiments warm, aspirations intense,
That gush, intermingle and flow in a stream,
'Tis dangerous—ah! a most dangerous dream.
The heart moves sudden. What says the Evangel?
The demon comes oft in the form of an angel.

Much have I thought on this discourse sublime,
And I turn to the theme, more sombre each time.
Sad fate, and sad world! Where all is to fear,
The judgment seems harsh,—I almost am near
To find it unjust, and yet yesterday
I trembled,—scarce knew what I should say
When at the lone hearth, in eve's witching hour,
I felt at thine absence, a loss of all power,
And questioned myself, if there was not scope
In my joy at thy sight, for a blameable hope,
If fires not yet quite extinct in their ashes,
Darted no flame at the view of eyelashes
Ever drooped down, to veil the bright eyes,
As blue and as pure as the purest of skies;

If straight to my port, like a good ship I bore,
And was near thee just a friend,—nothing more.

No ! replied then, the interior low voice,
These ties can exist but in heaven. Rejoice,
When thou shalt be there ; here, dread, ever dread,
Lest poison be mixed by the Foe with thy bread ;
And I lay long awake, through the weary night
Murmuring to myself,—yes, yes, Bourdaloue is right.

LXXVI. IN PRAISE OF WOMEN.

Auguste Brizeux.

In my mistress I loved nought at first but her beauty,
The rosy fresh mouth to which smiles seemed a duty,
The shoulder's contour smooth and shining like gold,
And the lithe supple figure that the mirror adorning,
Bent at each step, as under wings of the morning,
Bend willows o'er waves their own grace to behold.

I knew then the beauty, nought to me it imported,
If a soul in her bright eyes, when spoke she, disported,
Under the long-pencilled and dark Arab brows,
Happy, happy to breathe the chaste air her surrounding,
And to hear the pure crystal of her accent resounding,
I moved in a dream when we mingled our vows.

Pardon if thou canst ! Lo, at thy feet I cry pardon !
When pale and heart-broken in the old wallëd garden
More feeble than thou, woman, more feeble by far,
I came all in tears,—thy aid,—thy counsel to borrow,
Then woke thy hid beauty in the midst of my sorrow,
And thy soul in its grandeur, shone out like a star !

O tears ! O deep sighs ! O love's mystic story !
Women, to charm us, have two crowns as their glory,

A visible beauty and a beauty unseen—
Beings twice-gifted ! Souls all-powerful and tender !
Our hearts and our wishes to them we surrender,
Firm-bound in their fetters, not of earth and terrene.

LXXVII. THE ROSE AND THE TOMB.

Victor Hugo.

The tomb said to the rose,—
Of the tears the night strows,
What makest thou, O flower of the dawning ?
The rose said to the tomb,—
Of what falls in thy womb,
What makest thou O gulf ever yawning ?

The rose whispered,—O tomb !
From those tears shed in gloom,
Is the scent famed in song and in story.
The tomb said,—O my pet !
Of each soul that I get,
I create a winged angel of glory.

LXXVIII. SONNET—OARYSTIS.

Josephin Soulary.

They go side by side, far, far from the town,
Eyes bent on the earth, hand linkëd in hand,
Nor think they've strayed, and are hemmed by a band
Of the forest, with the night coming down.
Where go they ? On to the wood's deepest brown,
Wherever their hearts intermingled, command,
He proud to have dared, albeit moved,—she grand
In her tremor and her beauty's bright crown.

Noword have they said, and yet *all* is told.
Children be happy, nor deem love a crime!
And thou Theocritus, bard famous and old,
Smile at the drama unfolding sublime;
Two thousand years o'er thy verses have rolled,
And lo! they bloom here,—defiant of time.

LXXIX. A FLAME.

Charles Coran.

Sportsmen overtaken by night, sportsmen all loaded with game,
By the old winding roadway back to the village we came,
But down there, what, what is that light?

One of us, a farmer, said:—"On the summit of the hill
It is Lucas the shepherd, he guards my flocks by the mill,
His fire of vine-branches burns bright."

A churchwarden soon answered:—"Neighbour your pardon and leave,
It's the moon which strikes on—for look how clear is the eve—
The cock on our church-steeple's height."

The proud mayor interrupted:—"No, no sir, it is not,
It's a torch of rebellion,—the low knaves brew a plot;
Ho! Gendarmes, shoot, shoot them outright."

"All errors, good sirs,"—said the master that taught in the school,
"Look how it is moving,—if it is'nt Jupiter I'm a fool,
It's the planet that gleams on our sight."

But I said low, low in my heart:—"It's a link or a brand,
And it gleams from the castle's high turret—held in the hand
Of a girl with cheeks red and white."

Yes,—the beacon far streaming is an accomplice of Love,
It apprises the lover back from the chase, that his dove
Is watching to meet him at night.

LXXX. THE FOUNDLING.

Alexandre Soumet.

I have shaken off the painful, painful sleep
Unvisited by happy dreams ;
Ere the first ray of sunlight gleams
Upon the hill,——thereon in dark I creep.
With smiling Nature, waking up,
The young bird twitters under the white-thorn in flower,
Its mother brings it sweet soft food this hour,—
Mine eyes are like an over-brimming cup.
Ah ! Wherefore have I not a mother ?
Wherefore am I not like that young bird
Whose nest is balanced in the boughs wind-stirred ?
Nothing on earth is mine—no brother,—
Not even a cradle had I ;—on a stone
Before the village church I had been left,
A passer found me lying all alone
Homeless and friendless, and of help bereft.
Far from my banished parents, never known,
Of all caresses ignorant I live,
And the children of the valley never own
Or call me sister,—or aught in kindness give.
I never join in games of evening's hour
When women spin and children stories hear.
Under his roof of thatch that trees embower
The peasant never calls me when I'm near.
But from afar I see his children all,
Around the crackling vine-leaves in a glow,
Search on his knees the sweet caress of eve.
Towards the open chapel tired I crawl

Oft weeping;—the only house below
Where I am not a stranger;—the only door
Which does not shut at my approach. I grieve
But feel consoled when kneeling on that floor.
Then at the hour of prayer
Often my wandering footsteps stray
Among the lonely tombs. No peace is there.
The tombs are all indifferent unto me.
The poor girl has no kinsfolk 'mid the dead,
As on the earth no help or stay.
For fourteen springs I've wept for thee,
And longed to rest upon thy breast my head,
Return, oh mother, that hast so long fled,
I wait here by the stone,—return by Pity led,—
Where once in agony wild
Thou hadst forsaken thy poor child,

LXXXI. A LA GRÂCE DE DIEU.

Gustave Lemoine,

Thou art leaving, my child, our hills,
To earn thy bread in cities wide,
And sorrow all my bosom fills
That I thy steps no more may guide.
Oh, guard the child the heavens commit
Good folk of Paris to your care!
Poor mothers while at home we sit
What dangers must our children dare,
To whom we bid adieu,
Adieu and God-speed!
Adieu under the grace of God!

Life's voyage here begins for thee,
Ah! If thou shouldst never come again!

And thy poor mother—how can she
Bless thee, oh darling, in her pain.
Work well, and ever ever pray—
Prayer gives the heart its strength and ring,
Think of thy mother oft,—men say
Good luck from that must surely spring.
And so my dear adieu,
Adieu and God-speed!
Adieu under the grace of God!

She went away,—the banished maid,
To gain her bread 'neath other skies,
Long, long the patient mother staid—
And followed her with eager eyes,
But when her bitter grief no more
Her child might witness,—then there came
A shower of tears, that showed how sore
The heart was tired,—and still her name
Came from afar,—adieu
Oh mother—and adieu!
Adieu under the grace of God!

LXXXII. CHANSON.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments*)

The female? She is dead.
The male? The cat has fed
On his flesh and his bone.
To the nest which will come?
Oh, poor birdlings be dumb!
But they moan, the weak things, and they moan.

The shepherd? Gone or fled.
The dog? Killed, and instead

The wolf prowling alone.
He peers in,—Ho, I come !
He may pity, hope some,
Oh poor lambs, the wolf's heart is of stone.

The man ? To prison led.
The mother ? Sick-a-bed
In a work-house is thrown.
It is cold—will she come ?
They cry,—cry for a crumb,
Poor children ! And no mercy is shown.

LXXXIII. ROLAND.

TO P. T.

Napoléon Peyrat.

Where our south lands exposed to the warm sun are lying,
You are going, dear friend, like the wind wingëd and flying,
Already the team seems to fret,
Impatient, unquiet, and with eyes wildly glancing,
Brown beauty Toulouse, in thy sight to be prancing,
On thy plains that none can forget.

God guard you, my friend, but when you have skimmed lightly
O'er mountains, o'er vales, o'er blue streams that wind brightly,
Towns, hamlets and old citadels,
Vermilion Orleans, and Argenton's rocks hoary
And Limoge of the three graceful steeples—her glory,
Abundant in swallows and bells ;

And Brive and its Correze, and Cahors vine-crownëd,
Where Fenelon, swan in Homer's waters renownëd,
Swam pleased in his long trails of light,
Stop, stop for a moment your car's course enchanted,
To see the fair plain where the Moslem has planted
Your birth place—far seen—city white ;

These plains of perfume,—this clear horizon green rounded,
The murmuring Aveyron, by swards sloping bounded,
The Tescoud with flat pensive shores,
The Tarn wild and fierce, the Garonne whose wave dashes
Convulsive 'gainst islands green bannered, and flashes
Around the dark boats with long oars.

And then,—down there,—upon the horizon see yonder,
Mountains bathed in azure and sunlight,—and ponder
If they are a whale's huge skeleton
Tost in wrath from the oceans, or rather some Babel
Some ruin of giants or genii in fable
On which thunder its work has done.

No. The granite wall girding this paradise peerless,
'Twas Charlemagne, 'twas Roland the Paladin fearless
That notched it so deep and so far,
The last lopped the Valier, white and pyramidal,
In whirling his sword like the fire-sword of Michael
Against the proud Moors in the war.

The Moors have defeated the Goth kings at Xeres,
Their battalions mown down like the ripe sheaves of Ceres
Lie open on fields to the breeze,
The Arabs in the steps of Musa el Kevir
Have urged their white horses from the blue Guadalquivir
To the foot of the grey Pyrenees.

But one day that Musa el Kevir had followed
An old grisly bear to its cave that was hollowed
On their top,—in the tumult and whirl
He gained the peak snowy of Valier.....Blinded
He saw flowers heaped on flowers, and streamlets that winded
And Toulouse i'the midst like a pearl.

"Sons of Allah! Unsheath your bright swords! Sons of Allah!
Mount your fleet steeds! Paradise, Eden, Valhalla,
Are nothing, are nothing to France.

The olive grows there by the grape and red cherry,
'Tis a garden in blossom,—the abode of the peri,
A rose-bush in summer's warm glance."

Arabia from the rocks on our fields all in slumber
Came down.....Less nightingales springs number,
The summers less sheaves and less blooms!
White were the horses, and the mountain winds courted
Their manes steeped in silver; and their slim feet disported
Rough hair like an eagle's thick plumes.

These miscreant Moors, these cursed sons of Mahound,
Drank up all our wells, ate or destroyed all around,
Our pomegranates, our grapes and our figs;
They followed the virgins black-eyed, in our valleys,
Of love spake in moonlight, serenaded in alleys,
And danced Moorish dances and jigs.

For them were our beauties, for them their brown bosoms,
For them their long lashes, their mouths like red blossoms,
For them their fair oval faces,
And when they wept, crying out,—"Oh sons of the demons!"
They were put on the croup and carried as lemans
Away at fabulous paces.

"Woe to the miscreants—Woe, woe to the faithless!
"Woe,"—said Charlemagne,"and shall the villains pass scatheless?"
And he frowned with white lowering brows,
Flames burst from his eyes,—"No sire,—no cursed unbelievers,
Shall bear off your virgins, we'll hunt the bereavers,
If your Majesty but allows."

Charlemagne, Roland, Renaud of Montauban,
Are mounted, stout Turpin calls out for his foeman,
They scud like the sleet o'er the plain,
They've touched humbly the bones of Saint Rocamadour,
But from Canigou white to the willows of Adour,
The Moors have departed to Spain.

No! They are on the heights,—that menace denoteth!
Like a round tower, they deck each peak, and there floateth
Their banner from each, white and blue,
Bristles the granite with ramparts bright crested,
They cry—"Dogs, bite not the ears of leopards rough-breasted,
Nor trouble the lions though few."

And Roland roared fierce, and vultures gigantic,
And troops of brown eagles, like waves of th'Atlantic,
With cries piercing wheeled round and around,
"Wait a moment my birds,"—said Roland the peerless,
"And the tongues shall be still that gibe us now fearless,
And your food shall bestrew the ground."

A month hewed he, leaping from mountain to mountain,
Throwing corpses to eagles, and then to the fountain
Repairing at eve with wild laughter;
Souls filled the air like a black thunder-cloud scowling,
They went to the Demon, mewling, yelping and howling,
Who knows of their dark hereafter!

But thou fell'st at last Roland,—the hills keep—Oh wonder!
Thy bones, thy steps, thy voice, thy horn's deepest thunder,
And on their summits always new,
They show with clouds turbaned a Saracen gory,
His belt the cascade, and the scarf of his glory,
In sunshine the streamlet bright blue.

Our fathers bronzed by suns, by dust and gunpowder,
Died sword in hand, as cannon louder and louder,
Rolled wild o'er these rocks of old Spain!
Tell me, thou who saw'st them when they died side by side,
Were they great? Was our Emperor great, and allied
In fame to thy great Charlemagne?

Ah, if towards Eber some day passed over the border,
Our soldiers, guns, drums and steeds marching in order,
With our songs loud thundering in space,

Thou must rise up old lion,—now be it, or later,
Great was Napoleon and thine uncle, but greater
Is Freedom with fair open face.

LXXXIV. THE AWAKENING.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

There are days abject when seduced by joys,
Of Honor reft,
The peoples serve success, and follow noise,—
What then is left ?

Then from such peoples lulled by fatal dreams
In swoon-like sleep,
Virtue flows out, as blood from sword-wounds streams,
And angels weep.

Then,—then, before all Evil, Folly, Crime,
They but to live
Bend like vile reeds,—bow, bow, they say, in time,
And offerings give,

Then revels reign,—then whispers of the soul
Are heard no more,
They eat, drink, sing, nor care they, if they roll
In mire and gore.

Then happy Crime, by brazen tools obeyed
Seems half a god,
But bones of heroes quiver as afraid
Beneath the clod.

Then have men eyes, and yet they do not see
And fear no harms—
When sharp a clarion rings out—"Liberty !
"To arms ! To arms !"

And they awake, like drunkards whom the sun
Surprises rude,
Ah ! Well, if they can grasp at last the gun
For Right withstood !

LXXXV. TO THOSE WHO SLEEP.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

Enough of shame,—awake, Time cries,
To brave the bullets and the guns,
Still at its hour the tide must rise,
And France relies upon her sons.
Now tuck up sleeves of blouses blue,
Remember the men of Ninety-two
Dared twenty kings on battle plains—
Bastilles again and vilest chains !
What when the sires could Titans brave,
Shall dwarfs like these the sons enslave !

Sweep away the tyrant, and his bandits accurst !
God, God is with you, let Baal's priests do their worst !
God is king over all.
Before Him who is strong ? Lo ! He lifts up His hand,
And the tigers fly howling through deserts of sand,
And the sea-serpents crawl
Obedient and meek ! He breathes on idols of gold
In their temples of marble gigantic and old
And like Dagon they fall !

You are not armed ? It matters not,
Tear out the hinges of the door !
A hammer has deliverance wrought;
David had pebbles from the shore !
Shout for the Cause,—the flag advance !
Become once more the mighty France !

Paw as of old—with lowering horn !
Deliver, amid blood and smoke,
Your country from the despot's yoke,
Your memory from contempt and scorn.

What know ye not, the Royalists themselves were great
In the fierce days of struggle past away ? Men relate
What courage urged them on.
Valour in those times added a foot to men's height,
Witness Oh Vendée, if I speak not aright !
Witness thou land Breton !
To conquer a bastion, or to break through a wall,
Or spike a whole battery 'mid rain-showers of ball
Often one man has gone !

If in this sink, still, still men live,
If Frenchmen still, still act as slaves,
Trumpets and drums be broken,—give
Their fragments to the breezes. Graves
Of our sires where slumber deep
The old race, stir no more, but keep
Their shades in closest prison bound,—
For never could they—would they own
Such dastared sons ;—nor hare nor hound
The lion breeds, but whelps alone.

LXXXVI. THE VOULZIE.

Hégésippe Moreau.

Is there a river with more charms for a poet
Than the Voulzie ? I defy thee to show it.
Is the Voulzie a stream with great islands ? No,
Its charm lies in its murmur, low, very low,
The smallest of brooks, it knows hardly to flow.
A giant athirst at a breath might drink all
The Voulzie entire, from its source to its fall,

The dwarf Oberon who disports with its shells,
Across it might leap without wetting his bells ;
But the Voulzie I love, and dearly I love,
As pent in its flowers, with its dark woods above
With blackberries teeming, it hums monotone,
For there on its banks I have wandered alone
As a child. I'the shade of its forests profound
I have given a language, oft, oft to its sound ;
A schoolboy, poor, dreaming, whom men might call wild,
But happy, so happy, and so undefiled.
When my bread to the birds in pieces I threw,
And pleased in wild circles around me they flew,
The wave murmured, " hope, in days evil again
God this bread shall give back,"—the promise was vain.
Mine Egeria it was,—my loved oracle,
At all my sorrows it said—" hope child, 'tis well.
Hope, hope thou and sing, and know never a fear
Thy mother and Camille shall ever be near."
From the depths of my soul rang echoes out long
Responsive and faithful to that syren song.
Chimeras. Where are they ? Asleep, ah ! asleep
By the church where we prayed, in graves dark and deep,
The sole friends that greet me when here I return
Are corn-flowers and roses with dews in their urn,
All the rest, or nearly all, have left me and gone,
I long also to sleep,—but still journey on.
The thorns on the road, mock my rags as I pass,
It seems bordered with tombs, of loved ones, alas !
I played for a time on my lyre. Then I fled.
No echoes. 'Twas dreadful, to sing to the dead.
Delirious, I dashed into fragments the lyre
And flung them afar. Once could soothe and inspire
Those bits sacred of ivory ; once they were kept
And valued as treasures.....I thought and I wept.
Still, O my Voulzie, I forgive thee, and sad
In my own life, would have thy life ever glad.

To love me I need so a kind confidant,
To speak gently to me some friend I so want,
To be cheated with hope so eager I pant,
That ere my eyes close to the light of the day,
Ere my vexed spirit from the earth glides away,
I fain would revisit——God grant that I may !
Thy bank as a pilgrim that visits a shrine.
How glad I should look on the green bushes in line
So dear to my childhood ; or sleep to the voice
Of the wild whistling reeds ; or haply rejoice
Over the future reinvested with hues
From the rainbow's bright arch,—and fresh with the dews
Of the morn:—a vision of beauty serene,
Thou paintest, while prattling green borders between,
Deceitful and fair as of frost-work a scene.

LXXXVII. THE POLITICAL PRISONER.

Victor Hugo.

(Les Châtiments.)

Paths that from trees dark shadows borrow !
Green vale and wood and pebbled shore !
Wherefore this silence and this sorrow ?
A step that came here, comes no more.

Closed window, sign of some disaster !
Garden, where never flowers are seen !
And gray old house,—where is the master ?
Long in his home he has not been.

Mastiff keep watch. O stranger rather
On Desolation look thou here.
Child why weepest thou ? For my father.
And thou O woman ? For my dear.

Where is he gone ? He left no traces—
Whence come ye,—Waves, that thunder loud ?
We come from earth's dark cruel places.
And what bear ye ? A hammock-shroud.

LXXXVIII. MOSES.

Alfred De Vigny.

Upon the crests of tents the day-god threw
His rays oblique; blazed, dazzling to the view
The tracts of gold that on the air he leaves
When in the sands he sets on cloudless eves,
Purple and yellow clothed the desert plain.
High rose the sterile Nebo : climbed with pain
Moses the man of God, its rugged side,
No soul more meek, less subject unto pride.
One moment had he stopped to cast a look
Upon the vast horizon, Nature's book.
Pisgah at first he saw with fig-trees crowned,
Then, o'er the mountains as they stood around
Gilead, Ephraim, Manasseh,—lands
Fertile to his right, unvexed with sands,
Then to the south Judah far stretching wild
Its deserts, at whose edge the bright sea smiled.
Then further on, with olives graced a vale
Naphtali's portion,—pale, already pale
With twilight's shadows, then in flowers and calm
Jericho slumbering, city of the palm.
Then Phogor's meadows lengthened out with woods
Of mastic-trees, to Segor's solitudes.
He saw all Canaan, all the promised land
He knew he should not enter : stretched his hand
Over the Hebrews, as some words to say,
Then to the mountain top, in silence took his way.

The fields of Moab filled a circle vast,
On which the sacred mount its shadow cast,
Nearer, the host of Israël in the vale
Stirred like the blades of corn beneath the gale.
Ere yet on golden sands were dried the drops,
Or the pearls vanished from the maple's tops,
Since dawn, the prophet centenarian, feared
As more than man, and more than man revered,
Had left the camp, to seek the living Lord,
And hear,—oh wondrous privilege,—His word.
Men traced his march,—on, onwards as he went
By flames that darted from his eyes intent ;
And when the mountain's summit he attained,
And his brow pierced the cloud, whence silver-maned
The lightnings ran,—at once the incense smoke
From the stone altars in the valley broke.
Six hundred thousand Hebrews then in dust
Bent down. The perfumed cloud with every gust
Wavered around them, while the sun's last ray
Melted insensibly to sombre grey.
With one voice chanted in the twilight dim
Arose from many hearts the thrilling hymn ;
And Levi's sons erect among the crowd,
Stood like a cypress grove 'mid foreheads bowed,
In their skilled hands, clear, loud, the harp-strings rung,
While to the King of kings the people sung.

And in God's presence, Moses took his place
Veiled in the cloud,—and saw Him face to face.

He said,—" O Lord ! When shall my journey end ?
Where wilt Thou further yet Thy servant send ?
Must I live feared and lonely from my birth ?
Oh ! let me sleep the sleep of all the earth.
What have I done elected thus to stand ?
Lo ! I have led Thy people to their land.
Let some one else appear upon the scene
'Twixt Thee and them, like me to intervene.

Wild is Thy courser Israel, O my God !
He needs the iron curb and scorpion rod.
These and my book I gladly shall resign—
But Thou art just, Thy will be done, not mine.

" On all my hopes why still descends a blight ?
Why is my ignorance dispelled by light
Since from mount Horeb, unto Nebo mount
Six feet of earth alas ! I cannot count
To rest in ? What to him who never dies
Avails it to be wisest of the wise ?
My finger guides a nation's wanderings,
And draws down fire upon the heads of kings
With signs and portents no man ever saw ;
The future on its knees shall take my law ;
The dead, in old tombs opened at my choice,
Find a mysterious and prophetic voice ;
I stamp upon the nations with my feet ;
My hand makes armies triumph or retreat ;
I lift up generations ; at my frown
From their high place, headlong they tumble down ;
Mighty and lonely from alas ! my birth—
Now let me sleep the sleep of all the earth.

" Ah me ! The secrets even of the skies
Are known to me, such power Thou gav'st mine eyes ;
Night at my voice its dark veil rends afar,
My lips have named and counted every star.
O'er the blue heavens, whene'er those stars I call,
' Present'—they say, and shine out one and all.
I place my hands on clouds with sombre forms,
And from their flanks wring out the latent storms,
Cities I bury, in huge piles of sand,
Mountains o'erturn by winds at my command,
My feet ne'er tire when travelling through space,
At my nod rivers change their wonted place,
Ocean itself is silent at my voice,
I make thine Israël in his griefs rejoice.

When he requires new laws, or ease from pains,
I look up unto Thee. Thy Spirit deigns
To visit me; earth trembles to its source
And the sun starts affrighted from its course.
Angels admire me, jealous seem, and fear,
And yet good Lord, I am not happy here.
Mighty and lonely from alas! my birth,
Now let me sleep the sleep of all the earth.

"Thy breath inspired the shepherd's soul,—men saw
And thought me more than man, and fled in awe.
Bent low their eyes before mine eyes of flame,
For there they saw what thoughts within me came.
I've seen Love die, and Friendship quench his light,
And virgins veil themselves, or faint with fright.
And thus envelopped in a sable cloud
Alone and sad, I marched before the crowd.
'O lonely heart'—I said—'what wilt thou now?
Upon no breast may'st thou e'er lean thy brow,
Thy hand leaves fear upon the hand it meets,
Lightnings and storms on thy lips fix their seats.
Men cannot love thee,—see they tremble all,
Thou openest arms, and on their knees they fall.'
Mighty I've lived and lonely from my birth,
Oh let me sleep the sleep of all the earth."

The people waited long. They feared God's wrath,
And dared not gaze upon the mountain path,
Whene'er they raised their eyes, the clouds piled black
Redoubled deafening, thunder, storm and wrack,
And sheets of lightning blinding earth and air
Made them bow down again in silent prayer.
The mountain top at last from clouds grew free,
But where was Moses? Him they could not see.
They wept his loss. To lead them to their land
Stepped to the front, the sceptre in his hand,
Joshua, God's new Elect, oppressed with care,
Pensive and pale the weight of rule to bear.

LXXXIX. PANTOUM.

Théophile Gautier.

The butterflies as white as snow
  Float in bright swarms across the sea;
Gay butterflies, pray let me know
  When shall such wings be given to me?

Know'st thou O fairest of the fair,
  My Bayadère with eyes of jet,
If I could float like them in air,
  Where I should go through shine and wet?

Not to the rose, as red it glows,
  But o'er the vales and forests high,
Straight to thy lips that smiles unclose,
  Flower of my soul, and there I'd die.

XC. THE UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC.

Victor Hugo.

(Les Châtiments.)

"The Parliament of man, the Federation of the world."—

Tennyson.

O vision of a future time!
O prospect glorious and sublime!
The peoples from the dark gulfs spring,
The desert sands forlorn are past,
The green sward spreads beneath at last,
And earth and sky their bridals sing!

E'en now the eye that high up-towers
The bright dream sees,—no shadow lowers
Upon it, though so far away,

For snapped shall be each galling chain,
The Past was Hate,—is o'er his reign,
Thy name is Love, thou coming Day.

E'en now amid our sorrows dark,
The germ of Union lights its spark,
Men shall be brothers.—Thus God wills.
At dawn the humble bee awakes,
From poison flowers its honey makes,
And so works Progress with our ills.

See, see the black night disappears,
Free, free the world its head uprears,
No longer any Cæsar's thrall,
Fit to be wed, the nations seem,
And in the blue,—wide-stretching, gleam
The wings of Peace that cover all.

Surge up, free France—white-robed and pure !
Thy place is first, thy place is sure !
O triumph after sorrows dire !
The hammer on the anvil rings,
The blue sky smiles,—the redbreast sings,
From white-thorns drest in fresh attire.

The halberds are devoured by rust,
Canons and howitzers are dust,
There scarce remains, it is averred,
A fragment large enough to hold
A drop of water bright and cold,
To quench the longing of a bird.

Rancour and hatred are effaced,
One picture in all hearts is traced,
One purpose animates all minds ;
Equality,—no king,—no chief,
And God to tie the glorious sheaf
The tocsin's old rope round it binds.

A pin's point on the heavens is seen,
Look, look it widens,—nought can screen
Its lustre,—'tis the day begun.
Republic of all nations met
In conclave, but a point as yet,
To-morrow thou shalt be the sun.

THE DAWN.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

A sudden shudder sweeps across the plain
Still dark. It is the morning hour again,
The hour when Pythagoras loved to muse,
And Hesiod thoughtful walked on glittering dews,
The hour when tired of watching through the night
The sombre heavens and each mysterious light
The herdsmen of Chaldea felt a chill,
That horror of deep darkness, and that thrill,
That comes o'er watchers when their forces fail.—
Down there,—the fall of water in the vale
Seems wrinkled in a thousand folds, and shines
Like a rich satin garment. O'er the pines
Upon the sad horizon gleams the Morn
Whose teeth the pearls, whose lips the roses scorn,
An Eastern beauty,—Ruth amid the corn.
The oxen dream and bellow ; bullfinch, thrush,
And whistling jay awake in every bush ;
And from the wood in wild confusion blent
Resound the chirp and hum from throats long pent ;
The sheep display their fleece across the fence,
Not white as snow, but of a gold intense ;
And the young girl upon her bed of down,
Fresh as a rose, black-eyed, in shadow brown,
With shoulders white emerging from her gown,

But half awake,—thrusts out a foot that tries
To find the Chinese slipper, ere she rise.

Praise be to God ! After the sullen night
Always arrives the day, the welcome light
Eternal. On the mount wave heath and broom,
Nature superb and tranquil dons her bloom,
The light awakes the brood,—the young ones cry,
The cottage lifts its smoke-wreath to the sky,
Arrows of gold their way through forests force ;
Sooner than stop the sun upon its course,
One might reform the mean ignoble ways
Of those that rule us in these evil days,
To honor turn, to public good incline,
The soul of minister and base divine,
And mighty Cæsar reeling from his wine.

XCII. SONNET.

Émile Deschamps.

When Time, the changer of all men and things,
On this bright spot shall cast the shroud of years,
When all these oaks and firs he now reveres
He shall hurl down, to bloom no more in springs,
Shall History mount on its exultant wings,
Amid the chaos that transforms and sears,
To paint the past,—the wood that now appears,
The hunt,—the picnic,—and the pomp of kings?
I know not ;—but my verse shall strive to say
To men unborn, that here at Mortfontaine
Two months she past, which vanished like a day ;
Flowers in her presence bloomed as after rain,
Birds sang, deer sported ; hence to poets, aye
The place is dear, and lovers that complain.

XCIII. THE OCEAN.—AN ADRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

It resembles thee ; pacific yet dread,
A level under the Infinite spread ;
It moves, 'tis immense, 'tis soothed by a ray,
And kindled to wrath by Zephyr at play ;
'Tis music or discord,—sweet is its song,
Or hoarse its shriek as complaining of wrong ;
Monsters at ease sleep in its depths dark-green ;
The water-spout germinates there unseen ;
It has gulfs unknown, 'neath its surface plain,
And those who visit them, come not again ;
It lifts ships colossal and hurls them down
As thou hurlest despots. Black is its frown ;
The beacon above it shines like the light
Thou hast from heaven, thy steps to guide right ;
It caresses and chides if soft its mood
Or angry, but by no man understood
Is its humour. Like the terrible shock
Of armour clangs its wave on the rock,
Night listens with awe to the portentous sound
As it feels that like thee, the depth profound
Having roared at eve, shall destroy at morn,
For the wave is a sword. Venus when born
It hails with a hymn, immense and sublime,
Which has resounded through aeons of time :
Its universal blue, its wide wide expanse
Shelters the stars that there tremble and dance ;
It has a rude force,—a mercy superb,
For it roots up a rock, and spares an herb ;
It throws like thee on proud summits its foam ;
Inconstant, it loves round the world to roam ;
Only,—it never deceives when with eye
Fixed on its surface, one watches it nigh

From some rock or the sands,—pensive, alone,
Spell-bound by its murmur,—grand, monotone;
It never deceives, for though it is free
It obeys a high law unceasingly;
It never deceives,—for true to the hour
Rises its tide, O People,—in power,
Overwhelming, resistless, and fierce to devour.

XCIV. THE REST OF EVENING.

Pierre Dupont.

When the sun sinking to his rest
With long rays streaks the plain immense,
Like ripened corn glows all the West
With purple, red, and gold intense.
Deepen the shades, as lustre fades
Upon the hills in front,—at last
Blue vapours rise in coils and braids,
The sky grows gray,—and day is past.
Come, let us rest
Till dawn again,
Repose is blest
To toil and pain.

Lies in the furrow till receives
The earth its dews again, the plough,
Birds go to roost 'mid sheltering leaves;
Number the sheep beneath the bough
O Shepherds! Maidens, switch in hand
To fords conduct the beasts to drink!
How patient there the oxen stand!
How snort the steeds beside the brink!
Come, let us rest
Till dawn again,
Repose is blest
To toil and pain.

The spindles stop; the bright lamps shine;
Curls of white smoke from roofs ascend,
Of evening's repast the sign;
The clock strikes; work is at an end;
The weary workman home-ward goes,
Home! 'tis a hovel,—but the light
Of love, rose-colours round it throws!
He hastes;—already 'tis in sight!
Come, let us rest
Till dawn again,
Repose is blest
To toil and pain.

The busy wife and children dear
Await his presence anxiously,
Soon as they see him—"Lo! he's here!"
Bursts from their lips the common cry.
Sweet kisses,—home-made wine,—and food,
Revive his pale, pale face again,
His children have had bread,—and should
A man with such a wife complain?
Come, let us rest
Till dawn again,
Repose is blest
To toil and pain.

The hearth-fires all die slowly out,
Far off—is heard a deadened roar,
Engines released from work no doubt,—
The hammer strokes resound no more.
From noises vain and empty shows,
Let us our souls now turn away,
Night,—with the starry crown that glows
And Nature silent,—seem to pray.
Come, let us rest
Till dawn again,
Repose is blest
To toil and pain.

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XCV. SONNET.

Antoni Deschamps.

Betwixt two enemies I am confined,
Folly and Death ;—my reason is gone,
My life too shall go, for Death rushes on,
And I, all the while, am calm and resigned.
Still, when dear friends I recall to my mind,
And try my soul's withered parchment to con,
At thirty years withered,—sighs burst anon
And tears, through my shroud,—tears burning, that blind.
"And yet he breathes," between themselves say some,
"And stands like us on earth, perhaps he may
Long years survive us ; who knows what will come ?"
Yes, as the polypus, the fishes gay,
Or as the statue, in its marble dumb,
Survives the men in flesh that pass away.

XCVI. NAPOLÉON LE PETIT.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

His grandeur dazzled history ;
The god of war,
A star he was,—a mystery,
To nations far.
All Europe at his nod inclined
With terror dumb.
Art thou his ape ? March, march behind,
Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb.

Napoleon by the cannon's light,
Through smoke and cloud,
Guided across the hottest fight
The eagle proud.

He forced his way in, at Arcole
And out, with drum—
There's gold for thee, regale thy soul,
Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb.

Berlin, Vienna, Moscow,—all
Before him bent,
Not more an angel could appal
On vengeance sent.
Ho! Forts and fields! Ho! Kings and churls!
'Tis he—succumb!
But thou,—for thee, lo, here are girls,
Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb.

He rode o'er mountains and o'er plains,
And held confined
Within his palm, the guiding reins
Of all mankind.
His glories would the navies sink
So vast their sum!
For thee—see blood, come run and drink,
Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb.

Dark, dark archangel—but he fell!
Earth felt the sound,
And ocean opened by a spell
Its gulf profound.
Down headlong—but his name through time
Shall overcome—
Thou too shalt drown, but drown in slime
Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb.

XCVII. FLYTFAGLARNE.

X. Marmier.

Behold the birds; they go away,
They leave the countries of the North
For foreign regions green and gay.

Hark ! On the air their songs break forth !
Where dost Thou send us, God, they cry,
Oh whither wouldst Thou have us fly ?

We leave the Scandinavian soil,
Our birth-place dear, with bitter grief !
We were so happy here ; with toil
Upon the limes in flower and leaf
We had our nests built ; and the wind
The perfumed boughs swung to and fro ;
And now we must leave all behind ;
And speed,—ah where ? we little know.

Night in the forests was so fair
With her rose-crown and locks of gold !
We closed our eyes, but sleep was rare,
Night's beauty was so manifold !
And then, with songs we hailed afar
The Morning's prancing steeds and car.

The green tree threw its branches wide
Above the turf and trembling rose,
And dewdrops shed, with pearls that vied,
Pearls that on beauty's neck repose.
Now all is changed. A skeleton
The oak appears ; the storms affray ;
Light breezes and the rose are gone ;
And snows hide all the wealth of May.

How can we stay much longer here ?
Each day the sun becomes more pale,
The dim horizon more austere,
And earth more dreary in her mail,
God gave us wings and made us free ;
Hail waves tempestuous of the sea !

Thus sang the wildbirds as they fled ;
They gained a fairer country soon,
Where clustering vines the elmtrees wed,
And jasmines smile beneath the moon,

And rivers murmur under boughs
Of myrtles and of olives green,
And forests smooth their sombre brows
To hear sweet songs from throats unseen.

When earthly happiness shall fade
And change into a long regret,
When sorrow shall the prospect shade,
And hope, e'en hope the star shall set,
When autumn winds shall doleful sigh,
Grieve not poor Soul,—look up, on high.

Beyond the seas another land,
A fairer land than that they knew,
Welcomed of birds the timid band,
That wist not, poor things, where they flew.
Beyond the tomb there is a home
Where morning beams for ever shine,
Where that which troubles cannot come,
And tears are wiped, and none repine.

XCVIII. THE PLESIOSAURUS.

Louis Bouilhet.

(*Les Fossiles.*)

Sudden upon the shore 'mid dark, dark slime,
Lengthened a mass most frightful to behold,
Slowly it came, out of the foaming waves.
A breath inflated wide its livid flanks,—
And its huge viscid back with seaweeds sown
Rose, like a mountain drifted, high in air.
It rose ! It rose ! It covered all the coast ;
Under its wrinkled belly rang the shells ;
Its monstrous feet,—its big toes hard and scaled
Were spread out heavy on the shingles wet.

To sounds of far-off winds sometimes the shape
Turned its thin muzzle and its head deformed;
Bristled with hair, dilated like dark caves,
Its nostrils seemed to suck the whole world up
And to despise th'immensities of space;
While its eyes round, rimmed with metallic plates,
Senseless and glassy, swam like two dead moons.
Hideous, it stopped upon the salt sand's edge
While in long folds its tail still dragged the sea.
Then grinding fierce its large unmeasured teeth
And wrinkling on its back its serried scales,
With power, it vented out an outcry long,
Which spread afar beneath the firmament.
By mountains, and by woods of outlines sad,
The clamour solemn, like a billow rolled
To depths of horrid solitudes tenantless.
And the vast universe as in terror heard
The cry immense of life spread in the sky.

XCIX. MAXIMA DEBETUR PUERIS REVERENTIA.

Amédée Pommier.

Faith, loyalty, modesty, innocence,
Are like a precious essence in the heart,
Should the least shock the phial's crystal crack
The perfume vanishes, at once away.
Oh let us leave the child his candour fresh!
This velvet bloom that spreads on prune and peach,
This soft down, this virginity of fruit
Which the least friction utterly destroys,
This vapour varnish on the gilded grape,
This light, upon the picture, thrown from heaven,
This colored dust upon the butterfly,
This thin and subtle veil that longs to leave,

This network delicate that a breath would melt,
A covering frail, so frail and tinted so
With interwoven shades that cross and blend,
One fears to touch it, even with the thought.

C.

MARIE.

Auguste Brizeux.

One day we sat,—we two, on Kerlo bridge
With our feet on the wave, over the ridge,
Joyous to stop as it went on its way,
A branch, a fern, or a flower smiling gay,
And under the willows the fishes to spite
That came up to slumber in warmth and light.
Savage the spot was, no breath, no sound
Awoke in the valley, above and around,
Except our own laughter childish and shrill,
And our voices echoed loud back from the hill
To run through the labyrinth of dark woods
Fainter and fainter 'mid the solitudes:
For two brown forests the river enfold
As it seaward glides, slow, limpid and cold.
Alone in this desert, and free all the day,
Love filled our hearts in the midst of our play.
It was pleasure to see in the waters clear
A thousand small fish disport without fear,
Bite and pursue, or in bands swim along,
Fins of silver and gold displayed all the throng.
Then the royal salmon,—and 'neath the stone
The eel that hides by the bank all alone.
Numberless insects, transparent, with wings,
Mounted the current all day to the springs,
Bees, bluebottles, and alert dragon-flies
That fled under reeds escaping the eyes
Of swallows pursuing. One sat on the hand
Of Marie by chance,—a waif from a band,

Its aspect was strange, and wholly unknown,
Two goggle eyes, and of jet a black zone,
So forward I ran to crush it,—but lo!
Already 'twas seized, and held up for show
By my young peasant girl. Dazzling the wings,
Transparent, with slight rainbow colorings,—
On seeing the poor thing struggle with fear
"My God! How it trembles; why kill it—the dear?"
She said; while her mouth round, rosy and pure
Blew it in air, and then smiled demure,
While it sudden displayed its pinions of fire
And fled praising God,—rising higher and higher.

Many moons have past since that happy time,
Alas! many years. In life's sunny prime
In my fifteenth summer I had entered then—
Ah, how days dissipate, and vanish men!
But though days and years may pass like the breeze,
They never can tarnish such memories.
Other days shall come, and haply shall bring
Other feelings and loves upon their wing;
But the love of my youth, serene and pure,
In the shade of my heart shall ever endure,
Oh first love, oh first love, bloom ever bloom!
And shed through my life thy magic perfume!

O house of Moustoir! How often at night
And in crowds, amid noise, in days broad light
Thou gladd'nest mine eyes! Village roofs emerge
Bathed in a sea of foliage to the verge
Of skies for ever blue,—a slender coil
Of smoke arising speaks of daily toil,—
A woman in a field, that calls her boy
Far off,—a youthful herdsman in his joy
That sits beside a cow, and while it feeds
Tied to its tether, tries of river reeds

To make a rustic flute, and plaintively
Intones a simple Breton melody,—
An air so melancholy, soft and sweet
That you would weep to hear it. Then the heat,—
The rural hum,—the fragrance on the wind,
The grey old walls of cottages entwined
With ivy, and the pathways small and white
Bordered with heath. All, all in memory's light
Revive, as when with naked feet I ran
To Moustoir, where our dawn of love began,
When the port scaling,—ere darkness had bound
The earth, I hastened through familiar ground
To meet my loved one. Recollections fond
In which my poor heart revels—far beyond
Hopes for the future,—dreams, in which I live,
Which give me more than present joys can give ;
Thus day by day, unwearied I behold
The roofs of thatch, the woods that them enfold,—
The old wells where the women pitchers fill,
The court in flower, with bee-hives near the sill,
The threshing floor, the pump, the barn, the nook
With heaps of apples that most tempting look
Red-cheeked and golden, and the hay-ricks high,
The doors by which sleek cattle slothful lie,
The mangers clean, the piles of garnered straw,
Denoting rural comfort, household law,
How vivid all,—clear-pictured in my brain,
And how they come again and yet again !
The house I enter. Silence reigns profound,
The night is calm and dark, my steps resound;
A single ray darts on the ceiling beam
Straight as an arrow, round it dance and stream
Atoms of dust, that like diamonds gleam.
But soon each object lightens; I can see
The oaken bed and trunk, two steps from me.
Towards the door in turning, on a chest
Enormous, vases of all shapes abreast

With basins, dishes, jugs, and walnut spoons,
Rye-bread, and milk, and cheese, and grapes, and prunes,
And lower down beside the sacred hearth,
By which the tiny cricket shrills its mirth,
Calm sitting at her wheel, in shadow dim
Marie I recognise in her garments trim,
Contrasts her white skirt with her own rose hue
As she the folds arranges. Fills with dew
Mine eyes, as soft she says,—'Ah, is it you?'

CI. ADVICE AND REPLY.

Victor Hugo.

(Les Châtiments.)

They say,—Oh be prudent. Then comes this dithyrambe—
Wouldst *thou* strike down Nero?
Then crawl and be noiseless,—a wolf clothed like a lamb!
Success makes the hero.

Think of Ettenheim;—wait;—wait the day and the hour,
In patience be grounded;
Like Chereas, come alone, silent, sure of thy power,—
By darkness surrounded.

Let Prudence conduct thee,—thy reward she shall give;
Be masked, false, and hollow;
Ah well: let those anxious a long period to live
This sage counsel follow.

CII. THE WINE OF JURANÇON.

Charles Coran.

Small wine loved, of Jurançon,
Fresh thou art in memory!

Sang mine host ;—we drank anon,
Sheltered by a flowering tree.

Passing after twenty years,
Good mine host I found again,
On the same spot, and with tears
Heard once more the old refrain.

Welcomed me with warmth the wine,
As a friend of yesterday,
Shone past times in light divine,
Mirrored in the bottles gay.

Glass in hand, we cares forget,
Clink, clink, clink, but as we pledge—
Vinegar or else *piquette*
Faugh ! To set one's teeth on edge.

Good the growth ! Why—how's the thing ?
Same the wine, the very tun !
Thou, O brightness of my spring !
Vanished,—all the taste was gone.

CIII. THE OCEAN'S SONG.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

We walked amongst the ruins famed in story
Of Rozel-Tower,
And saw the boundless waters stretch in glory,
And heave in power.

O Ocean vast ! We heard thy song with wonder,
The waves kept time,
"Appear O Truth," thou sang'st with voice of thunder,
"And shine sublime.

"The world's enslaved, and hunted down by beagles,—
To despots sold,
Souls of deep thinkers, soar like mighty eagles,
The Right uphold.

"Be born; arise;—o'er earth and wild waves bounding
Peoples and suns!
Let darkness vanish;—tocsins be resounding,
And flashing, guns!

"And you,—who love no pomp of fogs, nor glamour,
Who fear no shocks,
Brave foam and lightning, hurricane and clamour,
Exiles and rocks!"

CIV. THE BUTTERFLY.

A de Lamartine.

To be born with spring, to die with the rose,
On zephyr to float where pleasures invite,
To quiver on breasts of flowers that unclose,
With scent to be drunk, and color and light,
To shake off the dust from pinions while young,
To fly i'the blue everlastingly hung,—
This is the lot of the bright butterfly;
And such is Desire that settles not down,
Skims o'er the earth, sips its wine's foaming crown,
And hastes to a home, unseen in the sky.

CV. QU'AIMEZ—VOUS?

Charles Dovalle.

I love a dark eye 'neath a pencilled brow,
On a white forehead I love raven hair,

And you have long black hair, you must allow,
O'er a white front, and where's the jet would dare
With such an eye compare?

I love a supple figure that with grace
Bends on a sofa,—idle all the day,
Have you e'er thought how in your 'customed place
You bend above a book? Not idle?—Nay,
Your occupation, pray?

I love a pained and melancholy look,
A throbbing heart, and eyes half-closed for tears,
And heavy sighs. An odd choice? Then O book,
Relate some tale of lover's griefs and fears,
And lo! The odd appears!

I love to find a compound made of joy
And reverie, and languor, deftly blent,
Whoever has it may my heart decoy,
Smile on, but say to whom this gift is lent,
And tell me who is meant!

Sometimes a word, a dream, a passing thought
Effaces from your cheek the color pale,
What marvels by a changing hue is wrought!
Why beats my heart to see the red prevail?
What makes mine eyesight fail?

Comes a caprice half-shadowed, or a whim,
And off you dart, no bird is half so shy,
I love a thought half-shadowed, doubtful, dim,
I love the place to which you bid good-bye,
And that to which you fly.

An angel,—fair as you are, just the same,
Of whom the voice as tender is and true,
Who also smiles, who bears your very name,
In dreams whom often in the night I view,
I deeply love,.....and you?

CVI. MY UTOPIA.

A. M. Cuvillier-Fleury.

Amédée Pommier.

A poem to be gathered in a book
Of golden song,—to occupy its nook
In a collection not unworthily,
An ode, a sonnet, or an elegy,—
This was and is my day-dream. Oh for power
To generate a marvel, like a flower
Delicate; polished, damaskeened with gold
And rich enamelled, like a sword-hilt old!
No monument ambitious would I raise,
Pyramid or palace that would fix the gaze,
Or pompous column towering to the skies,
But a mere atom, nothing in its size,
Yet a creation, wonderful; sublime
By its perfection; a short magic rhyme;
A work of patience, humble, seeming-slight,
Formed slowly like the brilliant stalactite,
Worth a great poem in its tenuity,
And born to last through all eternity.
Oh to show forth what constancy of heart
And study may achieve in noble art!
Oh to create with love and anxious care,
And leave the world, the poet's only heir,
A brave medallion, like a relic rare,
Which would be better loved and understood
As years glide silent, by the multitude,
And which would in the course of time command
The homage due unto the master-hand.

Greek lapidaries of an age long past
Who wrought works delicate for aye to last,
Whose skilful fingers on the agate cut
Venus and Hebe, and where rocks abut

Over the waters, Sappho with her lyre,
Sculptors minute, whose wonders never tire,
Artists in truth, and nature's worshippers,
Who jousted like brave knight-jewellers
To win the honors of the highest place
For bold conception, delicacy, grace!
Ah, that I also had the tool and hand
Which graves a profile from the heavenly land,
Or a fair figure, such as sometimes gleams
Athwart a poet's or a virgin's dreams!
I would have made an ornamental seal
Big as a thumb-nail, with a madman's zeal
And unremitting labour, all alone,
Upon a bit of ivory or stone.
I would have staked mine art, my chance of fame,
In richly working out my thought and aim,
And left behind an everlasting gem,
Large as a peach-stone,—worth a diadem!
We die now from redundance and excess,
Elixirs and perfumes are spiritless
Unless condensed; diffuse thoughts need a press.
I should collect the tear,—though hard my part,
That filters from a suffering broken heart,
Then like a fly in amber it should shine,
Placed in its frame, as in a sacred shrine,
Or sepulchre transparent. As the fly
Looks in its case a jewel from the sky,
So should the dew-drop like a star shed calm
When in my verse the treasure I embalm.

But great good fortune comes not every day,
Horace and Petrarch each in his own way
Were favored oft. Ah, e'en in petty things
The perfect and the absolute are for kings
Of thought,—not open here below
To all, but only those on whom bestow
The Muses, gifts. This ideal model small
That in our spirits floats scarce seen at all,

This grain of dust, this sun-kist glittering mote,
Of art this intangible asymptote,
Is hard to seize and hard to realise,
Though our hearts break in trying,—off it flies!
We weep not all alas! the tears sublime
That crystallize and change to pearls by time.

CVII

STANCES.

À. M. De Lamartine.

Emile Deschamps.

Sombre ocean from the crest of these heights
The fishermen's skiffs I love to behold,
Under larch shadows the fresh wind invites,
Gay rover from fields of foam and of gold.
I wish on these shores I visit this eve,
My dreams to recall, though vanished yet dear,
My heart feels a lull, a kind of reprieve,
To hear thy lament, now far off, now near,
Sombre ocean, cry, cry wildly and heave!
I love to dream on by the waves I revere.

Sombre ocean I could spend all my life,
Here by thy waves, as they struggle and swell,
Trembles my frame at the sound of the strife,
But falls on my soul their sheen like a spell.
O lakes of the earth by trees hemmed around,
Late praised in my song, your beauties appear
Languid and stagnant, since Ocean profound
Yawned black in my sight, while lightning's flashed clear.
Sombre ocean stretch wide,—wide without bound,
I love to sing songs to the waves I revere.

Sombre ocean thou art sometimes in smiles
Spread under Venus, the planet of love,

Then stammers thy voice, and softly beguiles
The earth, with a speech, known only above.
Then wild, wild again,—thy waves dart and roll
Like coursers green-maned in furious career,
Backwards and forwards, beyond all control,
With laughter that seems our weakness to jeer.
Sombre ocean, thou overwhelmest my soul,
I love to shudder, by the waves I revere.

Sombre ocean, whether thy waves leap high,
Or sleep like a field when harvest is gone,
Thy grandeur our thoughts lifts up to the sky,
The Infinite speaks and leads our hearts on.
Who in thy presence, what atheist or fool
Would dare to deny the God whom we fear?
Thou art His mirror; and also our school,
Where faith's great lesson distinct we may hear.
Sombre ocean with the breeze ever cool,
Instinctive I pray, by the waves I revere!

CVIII THE RESTING-PLACE OF THE KINE.

Auguste Barbier.

They rested in the shadow of great oaks,
Near them arrived, where moss the small flowers chokes,
We stopped awhile to contemplate the group,
The tableau of the quiet slumbering troop;
Athwart the thickness of the verdant crest
Darted the sun, filtering the lustre prest
Huge gnarled trunks, and branches stretched out wide,
And tipped with gold, horn, mouth, or glossy side;
Then brought the wind in gusts, by fits intense,
The odours of fresh milk that charm the sense.
A hundred kine were there, and for their guard
One herdsman and a dog,—sole watch and ward.

The man upon a small mound, peeled a branch,
The dog lay close beside, alert and staunch,
With ear attentive ever, and his eye
Fixed on his loving master, anxiously.
Kind salutations, and some kind words past
We to the herdsman said—"to lead so vast
"A herd, one dog seems scarce sufficient."—"True,"
Replied the herdsman,—"but the dogs are few
That equal mine; in forests such as these,
Labyrinthine, dense with brushwood as with trees,
Three dogs would scarcely be too many,—mine
Alone can manage and control the kine.
But hold,—the sun goes down,—the herd must feed
A few hours longer on the open mead,
If you should like to see it wake and stir,
My dog shall show his work and character."
This said he rose and cried—" Hola! Bonhomme!
We must to work,—no dog in Christendom
Better deserves the name. Now, jump up! Stand!"
A whistle followed, like a last command.
Swift as an arrow from the bent bow darts
Ran Bonhomme to the grove's most shadowed parts,
Where the cows slumbered with their colors blent
And glossy skins packed close as in a tent.
Some time elapsed without the slightest sound,
Or slightest movement in the leaf-hid ground,
Anon, commenced the tinkling of the bells,
And lo! A red flank or a white head swells,
Then one by one they step forth on the plain,
Sleek, grand, enormous, glad to snuff again
The pure air, and enjoy the setting sun.
When all were out, his task allotted done,
The dog came breathless from the shaded nook
With open mouth, and tail that lightly shook,
To ask approval from his master's look.
Then was it, that the young and happy child
Who walked with us, an angel undefiled

Drew from her basket's depth, a bit of bread
And in compassion bold, and blushing red,
Gave it the dog. He darted at the boon
Thankful to seize it. Suddenly and soon
Arose the signal whistle once again,
And at that sovereign order,—on the plain
The faithful servant flew, nor looked behind,
The tempting object willingly resigned.
No hesitation was there,—no delay,
Eager he ran, impatient to obey.
The rapid noble movement made us feel
A pleasure pure we cared not to conceal,
Akin to that which rises up serene
In generous hearts divested of the mean,
At some heroic action unforeseen.
"Heroic?"—Yes, oh, let th'expression stand,
The dog's submission, in our minds, was grand.
Hungry, since morning haply, in the wood,
At work,—on watch,—forlorn in solitude,
Preferred he duty, to the tempting food.

CIX.

PATRIA.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

Who smiles there? Is it
A stray spirit
Or woman fair?
Sombre yet soft is the brow!
Bow, nations, bow;
O soul in air,
Speak what art thou?

In grief the fair face seems—
What mean these sudden gleams!

Our antique pride, and dreams
Start up, as beams
The conquering glance,—
It makes our sad hearts dance,
And wakes in woods hushed long
The wild bird's song.

Angel of day!
Our Hope, Love, Stay,
Thy countenance
Lights land and sea
Eternally.
Thy name is France
Or Verity.

Fair angel in thy glass
When vile things move or pass,
Clouds in the skies amass;
Terrible, alas!
Thy stern commands are then.
"Form, form battalions, men,
The flag display."
And men obey.

Angel of night!
Sent kings to smite,
The words in dark skies glance,
"Mené, Mené;"—hiss
Bolts that never miss!
Thy name is France,
Or Nemesis.

As halcyons in May
O nations in his ray
Float and bask for aye,
Nor know decay!
One arm upraised to heaven
Shuts the past forgiven;
One holds a sword
To quell hell's horde.

Angel of God !
Thy wings stretch broad
As heaven's expanse !
To shield and free
Humanity !
Thy name is France
Or Liberty.

CX. A SOUVENIR OF THE NIGHT OF THE 4TH.

Victor Hugo.

(Les Châtiments.)

The child had received two balls in the head,
But his bosom still throbbed ; he was not dead ;
The house was humble, peaceable and clean,
A portrait on the wall,—beneath was seen
A branch blessed by the priest, for good luck kept ;
An old grandmother sat quiet and wept.
We undrest him in silence. His pale lips
Oped ; Death on his eye cast fierce its eclipse ;
His arms hung down ; he seemed in a trance ;
A top fell out from his pocket by chance ;
The holes of his wounds seemed made by a wedge :
Have you seen mulberries bleed in a hedge ?
His skull was open like wood that is split ;
The grandmother looked on, at us, and it.
' God ! How white he is,—bring hither the lamp,'
She said at last,—' and how his temples are damp !
And how his poor hair is glued to his brow !'—
And on her knee she took him,—undrest now.
The night was dreary ;—random shots were heard
In the street ;—death's work went on undeterred.
'We must bury the child',—whispered our men,
And they took a white sheet from the press,—then
Still unconscious of the death of her boy,
The grandmother brought him,—her only joy,

Close, close to the hearth, in hopes that the fire
His stiffening limbs with warmth would inspire.
Alas ! When death touches with hands ice-chill
Nothing again can warm, do what we will.
She bent her head, drew off the socks, and took
The naked feet in hands withered that shook.
Ah ! Was not that a sight our hearts to tear !
Said she, " Sir,—he was not eight,—and so fair !
His masters,—he went to school,—were content,
He wrote all my letters, on errands went
When I had need,—and are they going now
To kill poor children,—the brigands allow
Such to pass free. Are they brigands ? Or worse ?
A Government ! 'Tis a scourge and a curse !
He was playing this morn, alert and gay,
There, by that window, in the sun's bright ray,
Why did they kill the poor thing, at his play ?
He passed on to the street ; was that a crime ?
They fired on him straight ; they wasted no time.
Sir, he was good and sweet as an angel,—
Ah ! I am old ;—by the blessed Evangel
I should have left the sad earth with light heart,
If it would have pleased Monsieur Bonaparte
To kill me instead of this orphan child !"
She stopped,—sobs choked her,—then went on more wild,
While all wept around, e'en hearts made of stone—
' What's to become of me left now alone ?
Oh ! Tell me this, for my senses get dim—
His mother left me one child,—only him.
Why did they kill him,—I would know it,—why ?
Long live the Republic, he did not cry,
When that shout, like a wave, came rolling high ? '

We stood silent, heads low, hearts full of grief,
Trembling before a sorrow past relief.

Mother, you understand no politics,—
Monsieur Napoleon, that's his true name, sticks

To his rights. Look, he is poor, and a prince,
He loves palaces he enjoyed long since,
It suits him to have horses, servants, gold
For his table, his hunt, his play high and bold,
His alcove rich-decked, his furniture brave,
And by the same occasion he may save
The Family, Society, and the Church,
Should not the eagle on the high rock perch ?
Should he not take advantage of the time
When all ends can be served ? 'Twould be a crime.
He must have Saint-Cloud bedecked with the rose
Where Prefects and Mayors may kiss his toes.
And so it is,—that old grandmothers must
Trail their gray hair in the mire and the dust,
While they sew with fingers trembling and cold,
The shroud of poor children, seven years old.

CXI.

HOPE.

To my friend Ferdinand D.....

Sainte-Beuve.

Ce soleil-ci n'est pas le véritable ;
Je m'attends à mieux.

Ducis.

When winter's last reflections lie
Upon the front of leafless woods,
When still the north-east wind is high,
Whistling and thundering, loth to die,
And snows still sheet the solitudes ;

Sudden a warm, warm breath is felt
That fills the soul with love and awe,
Sudden one morn, the vapours melt,
And on the ice is seen a belt,
A band,—that ushers in the thaw :

Then, to the sun, the snows exhale,
The soil gets soft and seems to heave;
And Nature tries her marriage veil
In secret, like a virgin pale
While yet far off the wedding eve.

At first, unseen the green blade peeps
In furrows high-ridged, straight and long;
On old gnarled trunks the fresh sap creeps;
And on the mossy rock up leaps
The cress as if it feared no wrong.

The ivy, on the walls appears,
Walls that have lost their snowy crest;
No leaves as yet,—the forest rears
Now only their bright pioneers,
Blossoms and sprouts by winds carest.

Water, no longer dormant lies,
The torrent frozen long and fast
Trickles adown the hill, and tries
Freer to flow, like tears from eyes
Of mourners whose despair is past.

Birds! Do not sing the golden morn,
The morn of blessed, blessed spring!
Flowers! Haste not eager to be born!
Winter may yet have days forlorn,
In patience wait,—the hour shall ring.

Thus,—thus in age, when near our goal,
We feel from earth-ties almost free,
Away the vapours sometimes roll,
And spite its vision weak, the soul
Has glimpses of Eternity!

A faint reflection,—far, obscure
Of brighter suns,—a sparkle pale
From the life-fountain's column pure,—

A vague dawn,—but the herald sure
Of that bright Spring that shall not fail.

CXII. FRANCE, À L'HEURE OÙ TÙ TE PROSTERNES.

Victor Hugo.

(Les Châtiments.)

France ! At the hour when thou bow'st down
The tyrant's foot upon thy head !
A voice shall ring from caverns brown
At which the chained joy-tears shall shed.

The exile standing on the shore,
And looking at the star and wave,
Shall speak as prophets spake of yore,
Whom God a fearless puissance gave.

And then, his menaces of might
Lightnings from east to west unrolled,
Shall pass athwart the sullen night
Like glaves that unseen fingers hold.

Tremble, O mountain, to thy breast
Deep-veined with marble, towering high !
Shiver, O tree with lofty crest,
To hear the words when they whirl by.

They'll have the trumpet's lofty sound,
The shriek that makes the ravens cower,
The still small breath, on graveyard mound,
That stirs the humble grass and flower.

' Shame to the Tyrant !'—They shall shout,
' Shame to the vile, vile homicide !'
And weakest souls shall round about
Gather like warriors brave and tried.

Upon the race transforming now
The words shall like a storm-cloud wheel,
And if the living hide their brow
The dead shall wake with fire and steel.

CXIII. THE FALL OF THE LEAVES.

Charles Millevoye.

The autumn had bestrewed the vale
With withered leaves,—the woods were left
Bare, and of mystery bereft,
And voiceless was the nightingale ;
Sad, almost dying in his dawn,
A sick youth, wandered slow, in tears,
Once more in places far withdrawn
That he had loved in earlier years.
" Woods that I love, adieu !—Your gloom,
Your mourning, suits me, for I read
In every leaf that falls, my doom !
The hour approaches and with speed.
Epidaurus' fatal oracle !
With every gust you seem to tell,
'—Our leaves are yellow, see they die !
They vanish, take a last long look,
Thy night of death too, draweth nigh ;
More pale than autumn,—like the brook
Thou glidest onward to the sea
Wild-heaving of Eternity.
Before the green grass on the mead,
Before the vine-branch on the hill
Thy youth shall wither.' And indeed
I die. A breath, funereal, chill,
Has touched me, and my winter lowers
Ere yet my spring has hardly flown,
A shrub in one day overthrown !

That had produced some common flowers,
But had too little sap to deck
Its branches thin, with any fruit:
Fall, fall ye leaves, the world's a wreck !
And Hope no more hath room to shoot !
Veil from all eyes the mournful road !
Veil from my mother's blank despair
The place which must be my abode
To-morrow, and her sorrow spare.
But if towards the lonely lane
The maid I love should ever stray,
To weep when day-light softly dies,
With a slight rustle, wake again
My shadow underneath the clay,
And so console it where it lies."

He said and went.....and came not back.
The last leaf from the bough that fell
Signalled his last day on the earth.
Clouds in the heavens hung scowling, black,
When 'neath an oak of sovereign girth
They laid him in his lonely cell.
But she the loved one to the wood
Came never. By the cold grey stone
No sound is heard ; the solitude
Is undisturbed save when alone,
The herdsman's steps, by chance, intrude,
Or hidden dove coos monotone.

CXIV. THE CLARIONS OF THOUGHT.

Victor Hugo.

(*Les Châtiments.*)

Sound, sound for ever clarions of thought !

When Joshua 'gainst the high-walled city fought,
He marched around it with his head raised high,
His troops in serried order following nigh,
But not a sword was drawn, no blood outsprang,
Only the trumpets the shrill onset rang.
At the first round, smiled scornfully the king,
And at the second said, half-wondering,
'Hop'st thou with noise my fortress to break down?'
At the third turn, the ark of old renown
Went forward, then the trumpets sounding loud,
And then the troops with ensigns waving proud.
Stepped out upon the old walls children dark
With horns to mock the notes, and hiss the ark.
At the fourth turn braving the Israelites,
Women appeared on crenulated heights,
—The battlements embrowned with age and rust,—
And hurled upon the Hebrews stones and dust,
And spun and sang when weary of the game.
At the fifth time, up came the blind and lame,
And with wild uproar clamorous and high
Railed at the clarion ringing in the sky.
At the sixth time, upon a tower's high crest,
So high, that there the eagle built his nest,
So hard, that on it, lightnings struck in vain,
Appeared in merriment the king again,
'These Hebrews good musicians are, it seems,'
He said loud laughing,—'but they live on dreams.'
The princes laughed submissive to the king,
Laughed all the courtiers in a glittering ring,
And thence the laughter spread through all the town.

At the seventh time,——the solid walls fell down.

CXV. LA CHANSON DES ADIEUX.

André Theuriet.

The lover said to Love, about to fly,
"Go not, dear Love, away;

O my sole wealth, mine idol, refuge high,
Thy gold wings furl, and stay.

" Within my heart is not thy place, the best?
Repcsest thou not there
As the wild wood-bird in its mossy nest ?
Why wilt thou go,—and where ?

" Rest !—In the house that peace and silence crown,
Beside the waters still,
Were we not happy when the night came down
On hamlet and on hill ?

" Hast thou forgotten all the eves we past,
In summer side by side ?
See, in mine eyes the tears that gather fast !
O rest, whate'er betide.

" Thou dost not hear me, and thy bright wing throbs,
Thou burnest to depart;
Little import to thee my tears and sobs,
The torture in my heart."

—Love to the lover said, as far he flew,-
" O child, no ills forbode !
" Have I not given thee aspirations new
And lighter made thy load ?

" Have I not waked within thy slumbering breast
Thoughts heretofore unknown,
That like a troop of birds make music blest ?
Art thou not manlier grown ?

" Art thou not better ? vex not then thy mind,
If subject unto change,
More bitter tears to dry, worse wounds to bind,
From place to place I range.

" Adieu ! Lone dreamers elsewhere I must cheer,
And lo,—I leave with thee
Friends,—upon earth the only friends sincere,
The joys of memory.

" Some day I shall return,—knock at thy pane,—
Perhaps a suitor stand,—
Who knows if thou wilt welcome me again
And give me then thy hand ? "

CXVI. SOUVENIR D'UN VIEIL AIR.

Valéry Vernier.

It's strange, there needs nothing but a ballad romance,
The far-off remembrance of an air, brought by chance,
To give back to our heart its purity entire,
Our earliest bashfulness, and our candour and fire.

O refrain half-forgotten from some delicate hand !
Fragment of a sonata,—old, simple and grand !
O dream of Mozart that he had never written out,
That I hum in my sleep, and that floats all about!
Thou awaken'st one by one, the blest days of my prime,
Framed like a picture in a landscape sublime;
Thou restorest me Hours that pass smiling again,
Hand linked in hand as of fair wood-nymphs a train,
Treading down the high grass that green borders the road,
Which leads to our village,—to my childhood's abode.

From the plane-tree high lifted the twilight falls down;
O Night, Cleopatra with the bright starry crown !
Stop, stop a moment thy car, and quench not the sun,
Leave, leave us alone until our pastimes be done!
We are gathered together by Friendship divine.
How pleasant to run under the boughs that entwine !
The sward is so verdant and so lovely the hour !
To-morrow to meet thus, shall fate grant us the power ?

At last comes the darkness;—we embrace, bid adieu ;
Then home through the shadows while the stars are yet few !
At her side the good mother in prayer makes us kneel
Saying—"When tired of our pleasures 'tis fit that we feel
Our God's hand around us, for all good comes from Him !"
Song rises,—rises prayer, by the hearth embers dim.

Thus learnt, can those prayers,can those songs pass away?
Their echoes still ring and make us purer to-day.
The chaste sweet remembrance of the days that are past
Is the gold key that opens the soul's treasures shut fast
In a casket deep hidden,—the infallible sesame,
The talisman precious, that with tears we must name,
For it opens the gardens enchanted, the bowers,
Where the bloom is eternal on the fruits and the flowers.

CXVII. OCTOBER.

Émile Augier.

Since Cybelè has ended her loves for the year,
Since like the lone widow, until may, of the sun
Stripping her hymenëal robe,—ah! once so dear!
Leaf by leaf,—discrownëd, sad, cold, and in fear,
She sinks down to sleep till her mourning be done;

Since over the vine-plots, there has stolen a change,
And the grapes in the presses, have run red as of old,
For the cares of the winter, since peasants arrange,
And all husbandry-tools are laid by in the grange,
And cold mornings are closer to evenings as cold:

Let us leave the fields moistened, and the vineyards forlorn,
And at Paris regain our dear smoke-painted home;—
The cool shades of their thousand attractions are shorn,
The light garments half-open displease, and we scorn
To stir early from bed, on the hill-sides to roam.

What now we require most, is a closed room,—repose,
A fagot of broom made, or a fire made of logs,
Beer foaming, and a pipe that contentment bestows,—
And two friends to converse with as the night deeper grows,
With the heart overflowing, and the feet on the dogs.

CXVIII. WATTEAU.

Émile Augier.

Parks noble with long avenues of trees
Thick hornbeam hedges, and broad flights of stairs,
Where people in rich dress, in groups or pairs,
Converse or move, all this my charmed eye sees.

Upon that last step, see, a gallant youth,
He leads a high-born lady to the grove;
Slowly they wend—he seems to talk of love,
And she deep blushes in her virgin truth.

And here, upon the garden's greenest grass
Are loving couples negligently drest
In flashing shot-silks,—dance some, and some rest,
And some play on the viol, time to pass.

How calm is life! How happy all look here!
Music and sport hence banish every pain,
And Love and Leisure absolutely reign,
Love without mystery, Leisure without care!

CXXIX. CHINOISERIE.

Théophile Gautier.

It's not you, nor you madam, that I love,
Nor you Ophelia, nor you Juliet,
Nor Beatrix, nor e'en Laura far above
All the blond beauties, with her eyes of jet.

She whom I love in China now resides;
Upon a rock there is a porcelain tower
Beneath which calm the Yellow River glides
Haunted by cormorants,—there lives the flower!

She has most wondrous dainty little feet,
And flashing eyes deep-set within her head;
A clear tint where the white and crimson meet,
And long nails dyed with henna, deep, deep red.

Out of her trellis when she cares to gaze,
Although no poets may her praises sing,
The swallows wheeling past her fair cheek graze,
And peach-flowers looking up, like sweet bells ring.

CXX. ORSO.—A PASTORAL.

Émile Augier.

"This wild thrilling song, and this voice once again,
My dear, 'tis Orso who comes back to the plain!
Yes, Orso who sees me as day follows day:
Descending the last slope by the side of the springs,
He leads lusty his herd, while his voice cheerful rings,
'Mid the tramp heavy of cattle athirst on their way.

"When he comes home at evening the fair peasant maid
Who winnows the grain sitting calm in the shade,
Better to see him,—for his like there is none,—
On the steps at the door loves on tiptoe to stand,
And whispers he'll match any lord in the land
With his gold hair imprisoning the rays of the sun.

"If he wished it, he might to the loveliest pretend,
For the girls leave their sickles, and the reaping suspend
When the mother commences his marvellous tale,—
What goblets he won at the jousts year by year,
What rencontres he had by the wood, and how dear
He made nobles pay, who dared him to assail.

"But the herdsman possesses a heart that looks high,
He enquires not who loves him, what seamstresses sigh,
Or what harvest-gatherers blush red at his name!

In vain those make eyes, and strive hard these to shield
Their complexions amid the rough work of the field,
To secure his affections and kindle a flame.

"Orso regards not, and he takes the long road
Some two miles longer, just to pass our abode
And see my veil float at my casement,—but there
Ends all his love's boldness; and I to console,
This tenderness mute, which he cannot control,
Hang out the love-banner that he may not despair."

Thus spake proud Stella of the race of Sienne
High-born and lovely, she looks down on all men;
But the herdsman cares little for her, or her birth,
He loves a sweet girl in the village hard by,
Her figure is graceful, and dark is her eye,
And her heart is the tenderest of any on earth.

CXXI. THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW.

Victor Hugo.

(Les châtiments.)

It snowed. A defeat was our conquest red:
For the first time the eagle hung down its head.
Sombre days! The Emperor slowly came back,
Leaving behind him, Moscow smoking and black.
Like an avalanche winter burst amain,—
One white plain past, spread another white plain.
Nor banner nor chief any order could keep,—
Late the grand army, now bewildered sheep.
The wings from the centre could hardly be known.
It snowed. Dead horses and carts overthrown
Sheltered the wounded. Bivouacs forlorn
Displayed strange sights, sometimes, as broke the morn.
Trumpeters were seen, upright at their post,
Mute,—on the saddle,—and covered with frost;

Trumpets of copper that gave out no tone
Fixed, as for ever, unto lips of stone.
Bullets, grape-shot, and shells, mixed with the snow,
Rained as from heaven upon the troops below.
Surprised to find themselves trembling with cold
Who ne'er trembled from fear, these veterans bold
Marched pensive; on their gray moustaches clung
The hoar-frost; torn above the banners hung.
It snowed,—it snowed continuous. The chill breeze
Whistled upon the glazed frost's endless seas;
With naked feet,—on, on they ever went,
No bread to eat, and not a sheltering tent.
They were no more hearts living, troops of war,
They were mere phantoms of a dream, afar
In darkness wandering, amid vapours dim,—
A mystery,—of shadows a procession grim
Upon a black sky, to its very rim.
Solitude, vast and frightful to behold
Was every where,—a Nemesis mute and cold.
The snow wove silently as it fell dense,
A shroud immense for this army immense;
And every soul felt as if left alone
In a wide wilderness, where no light shone,
To die, with none to pity, or to see.
From this sad empire, shall we e'er get free?
Two foes, the Czar, the North. The North is worst.
Cannon were thrown away in haste accurst
To burn the frames and make the scant fire high;
Those who lay down, woke not, or woke to die.
Sad and confused, the groups that wildly fled,—
Devoured them all the desert still and dread.
'Neath the white folds, the blinding snow had raised
Whole regiments slept. History amazed
Beheld the ruin: What to this retreat,
Was any former downfall or defeat!
What Hannibal's reverses wrapped in gloom!
What Attila's, when whole hordes received their doom!

Fugitives, men wounded, guns, horses, carts,
Tumbrils and waggons, hurried from all parts
In wild confusion ;—at the bridges oft
The crush was frightful. Vultures wheeled aloft!
Ten thousand men lay down fatigued to sleep,
And then perhaps a hundred woke,—a heap
Of corpses had the rest become. One night,
Ney whom an army followed late, in flight
His watch disputed, with three Cossacks wild.—
" Who goes! Alert! To arms! " And then defiled
These phantoms with their guns, and o'er and o'er,
Came the same scenes of tumult and of gore.
Our troops beheld upon them headlong fall
Time after time, at some strange trumpet-call,
Frightful, enwrapt with gloom, with cries like those
Of the bald vultures 'mid the boundless snows,
Horrible squadrons, whirlwinds of wild men.
Perished our army, fled our glory then.
The Emperor was there. He stood and gazed
At the wild havoc all around, amazed.
As on a giant tree for ages spared
Falls the rude axe, misfortune now first dared
To strike upon him, and he trembling saw,
He, living oak, his branches fall, with awe.
Chiefs, soldiers, followers died. But with love
Those that remained, all dastard fear above,
Still watched his tent to see his shadow pass,
Backwards and forwards. They believed, alas!
Yet in his star ;—it could not, could not be,—
He had a work to do,—a destiny!
To hurl him headlong from his high estate,
Would be high treason in his bondsman Fate.
And all the while, he felt himself alone,
Stunned with disasters few have ever known.
Sudden, a fear came o'er his troubled soul,
What more was written in the Future's scroll?
Was this an expiation? It must be so.

For what? From whom could he the meaning know?
The man of glory trembled, weak and pale,
Like some frail reed beneath an autumn gale.
Where were his legions? Scattered on the plains
Or buried in the snow.—What now remains?
What hides the future still? Ah, who can say,
He turned to God, for one enlightening ray.
"Is this the vengeance God of Hosts?" He cried,
And his faint murmur on his pale lips died.
"Is this the vengeance? Must my glory set?"
A pause;—his name was called;—of flame a jet
Sprang in the darkness;—a voice answered,—"No,
Not yet."—Outside still lay the dazzling snow.
Was it a voice indeed? Or but a dream?
Hush! Hark! No, now, 'tis but the vulture's scream.

CXXII. THE FORTS OF PARIS.

Victor Hugo.

(L'Année Terrible.)

They are the watch-dogs, terrible, superb,
Enormous, faithfully that Paris guard.
As at each moment we could be surprised,
As a wild horde is there, as ambush vile
Creeps sometimes even to the city walls,
Nineteen in number, scattered on the mounts
They watch,——unquiet, menacing, sublime,
Over dark spaces limitless, at eve,
And as the night advances, warn, inform
And one another aid, far stretching out
Their necks of bronze around the wall immense.
They rest awake, while peacefully we sleep,
And in their hoarse lungs latent thunders growl
Low premonitions. Sometimes, from the hills
Sharply and suddenly bestrewed with stars,

A lightning darts athwart the sombre night
Over the valleys; then the heavy veil
Of twilight thick, or utter darkness, falls
Upon us, masking in its silence deep
A treacherous snare, and in its peace, a camp;
Like a huge crawling serpent round us winds
The enemy and enlaces us in coils
Inveterate, interminable, but in vain.
At a respectful distance keep the forts
A multitude, a populace of monstrous guns,
That, in the far horizon, wolf-like prowl.
Bivouac, and tomb, and prison, Paris now is all.
Upright and straight before the universe
That has become a solitude, she stands
A sentinel, and surprised with weariness
From over-watching, slumbers: all is still.
Men, women, children, sobs passionate, bursts
Of triumphant laughter, cars, footsteps, quays,
Squares, crossways, and the river's sandy banks,
The thousand roofs whence issue murmurs low,
The murmurs of our dreams, the hope that says
I trust and I believe, the hunger, that, I die,
The dark despair that knows not what it says,
All, all keep silence. O thou mighty crowd!
O noises indistinct and vague! O sleep
Of all a word! And O great glorious dreams
Unfathomable,—that ever one and all
Mock our frail wisdom, now are ye submerged
In one vast ocean of oblivion deep.—
But they—are there, formidable and grand,
Eternally on watch.
On a sudden spring
The people, startled, breathless, doleful, awed,
And bend to listen. What is it they hear?
A subterraneous roar,—a voice profound
As from a mountain's bowels. All the town
Listens intent, and all the country round

Awakes,—and hark! to the first rumbling sound
Succeeds a second, hollow, sullen, fierce,
And in the darkness other noises crash
And echo follows echo flying far!
A hundred voices terrible through night
Rolling, reverberating, and dying off!
It is the forts. It is that they have seen
In depths profound of spaces vast and dim
The sinister cannon-waggons darkly grouped;
It is, that they the outlines have surprised
Of cannons ranged; it is that in some wood
From whence the owl has fled on hurried wings,
Beside a field, they faintly have descried
The black swarm of battalions on the march,
With bayonet gleams, like points of silver sharp
Commingled; it is that in thickets dense
They have found out the flash of traitorous eyes
Or tread of stealthy steps.
How grand they are,
These great watch-dogs, that in the darkness bay!

CXXIII. TO MY GRANDCHILDREN.

Victor Hugo.

(*L'Année Terrible.*)

Children beloved, they shall tell you later of me,
How your grandsire dandled you well-pleased on his knee;
How he adored you, and how he strove on the earth
To do his best always; how alas! from his birth,
Of joy he had little, and of grief he had much;
How many maligned him, though he cared not for such;
How at the time you were very young and he old
He never had harsh words and airs fretful or cold
For you or for any,—and then how at the close
He left you for ever in the time of the rose;

How he died,—how he *was* a kind man after all ;
How in the famed winter when rained shell, shot, and ball,
He traversed Paris through, Paris girt by a horde,
Paris tragic, and full of the gleam of the sword,
To get you heaps of playthings, strange puppets and dolls
And bearded Jack-in-the-box, whose spring sudden appals,
And sometimes a flower pearled with the bright morning dews :
—And then pensive under the dark trees you will muse.

CXXIV. SONNET.—THE FOOT-PRINT ON THE SAND.

Joséphin Soulary.

A pretty foot,—a virgin's foot, no doubt,
Disdainful, arched and furtive, printed clear !
To find this Cinderella, far and near
The prince would have with many a wary scout
Searched for a century. I followed out
The marks in hope the vision would appear,
Either in pensive loveliness austere,
Or wreathed with smiles, but vainly looked about.
Two miles beneath the heavens, the steps to trace
Was joyful work,—at last a lake outspread—
No further marks ! And not a human face
In sight ! To right or left no pathway led !
Had Cinderella vanished into space ?
—The lake profound slept silent as the dead.

CXXV. THE DEATH OF THE WOLF.

Writen in the château of M. * **

Alfred De Vigny.

Across the large disk of the moon the clouds
Ran like the smoke across a bonfire's blaze ;

And to the farthest limits of the sky
The woods grew dark. We marched, in silence all,
Upon the humid turf, in dense low furze,
Or higher heath, when under stunted pines
Like those that stud the moors, we dimly traced
The big marks of the claws of wandering wolves
We had already tracked. We stopped and held
Our breath to listen. Neither in the wood,
Nor in the plain far off, nor in the air,
The faintest sound or sigh was audible ;
Only the distant village weathercock
Creaked to the firmament as if it mourned ;
For high uplifted soared above the earth
The wind, and it grazed only with its wings
The solitary towers and dim-seen spires,
While ancient oaks and other lofty trees,
That leaned their brows against the rocks below,
Seemed wrapt in slumber peaceful and profound.
Amid this silence suddenly crouched down
The oldest of us,—hunters on the search,—
More closely to regard the sand we trod,
For sand it was at present. Soon he rose
And in a low voice said, that thrilled through all,—
For never had he been in error yet
On such a subject,—that the recent marks
Announced the steady gait and powerful claws
Of two wolves full-grown followed by two cubs.
We then got ready our broad-bladed knives
And polished guns, and striving to conceal
The flashing lustre of the steel that shone
Too white in the surrounding darkness, moved
Step after step, pushing the boughs aside
That stretched across our path. Three stopped,—and then
While straining to find out what they had seen,
At once I saw two blazing eyes like coals,
And then four forms, agile, and lithe, and gaunt,
That danced in the faint moonlight on the furze

Like joyous greyhounds, such as oft are seen
Clamorous around their master from the chase
At eve returned. Similar was their form
And similar the dance ; only the wolves
And cubs gambolled in silence, as though they felt
The neighbourhood of man their mortal foe.
The male stood on his feet, and farther on
Against a tree the female wolf reclined,—
A marble image, like the one adored
By the old Romans as the heaven-sent nurse
Of Romulus and Remus demi-gods
Who from her shaggy side drew nourishment.—
A slight noise ! And the male wolf was alert,
His hooked nails buried in the sand, he looked
Intent around, then judged himself for lost.
He was surprised, and all retreat cut off !
Then sudden springing forth with flaming jaws,
He pounced upon the palpitating throat
Of the bold dog that rashly had drawn near :
Nor did he loose his terrible iron grip
Though rapid shots traversed his heaving flanks,
And sharp knives in his monstrous entrails plunged
Like lightnings crossed, and with each other clashed,
Until faint, gasping,—dead, the strangled hound
Rolled at his feet. He left his vanquished foe
And gazed at us. The knives still in his sides
Rested,—both buried to their very hilts.
He had been well nigh pinned unto the turf
Which his blood deluged. Still, around our guns
Menaced him, levelled ominously close,
A sinister crescent, but he heeded not.
He looked at us again, and then lay down
Licking the blood bespattered round his mouth,
And deigning not to know whence death had come
Shut his large eyes, and died without a cry.

2.

I leaned my forehead on my empty gun

And fell into a train of random thought,
Unwilling it may be, or unresolved
The she-wolf and her cubs to sacrifice.
These three had waited for the wolf, now dead ;
But for her cubs, I verily believe,
The fair and sombre female had done more !
She never would have let him die alone.
But to her heart her duty now was plain !
Her mother's instinct told her she must save
The offspring of her bowels with her life
If need should be, that she might teach them grown
To wolf's estate the duties of a wolf !
To suffer without shrinking hunger's pangs,
Never to enter into terms with man,
(Such as exist between him and the tribes
Of servile animals that bear his yoke,
Or chase the first possesors of the woods
And rocks before him,—to obtain a place
To sleep in, and a pittance from his hand,)
And to hold freedom dearer far than life.

3.

Alas ! I thought, in despite of the name,
Believed so great, the lofty name of man,
How weak we are ! How abject !—And I felt
A shame for all our race ! Life to forsake
And all its weight of sorrows and of ills
With dignity, mute, touching and sublime,
Is known alone to animals contemned.
To see what man, their lord, achieves on earth
And what he leaves untouched, inspires this thought,
—Silence is great alone, and all the rest
Is vanity and weakness here below.—
Ah ! I have learnt the lesson thou hast taught
Thou savage denizen of the forests wild,
And thy last look has entered to my heart ;
It said :—" If thou canst do it, mortal, strive
So that thy soul attain, through constant thought

And patient study, to the lofty height
Of stoic pride that cares not for events;
That height to which, born free in pathless woods,
I, without effort, from the first have reached.
To groan, to cry, to seek for any aid
Is cowardice. With energy and strength
Perform the long and often heavy task,
And walk in singleness of heart along
The way where fate has placed thee, whether smooth
Or rough it be. Fulfil thy calling high.
Then after that, like me, without complaint
Suffer and die, nor care to leave a name."

CXXVI. THE MESSAGE.

Henri Heine.

To horse, my squire! To horse and quick!
Be wingëd like the hurricane,
Fly to the chateau on the plain,
And bring me news for I am sick.

Glide 'mid the steeds and ask a groom,
After some talk, this simple thing—
Of the two daughters of our king
Who is to wed, and when, and whom?—

And if he tell thee;—'tis the brown,
Come sharply back and let me know;
But if,—the blonde, ride soft and slow,
The moonlight's pleasant on the down.

And as thou comest faithful squire,
Get me a rope from shop or store,
And gently enter through this door,
And speak no word, but swift retire.

CXXVII. SONNET.—DOWN THERE.

Joséphin Soulary.

In my indolent heart ever prompt is to fade
Yesterday's souvenir,—it leaves hardly a trace ;
But childhood, from borders hung with vapour and shade,
Sends back oft a sweet picture that nought can efface.
A landscape,—a plain sketch ;—how I love the dear glade !
O brown foster-sister, return, haste in thy grace,
And bring all our treasures,—the flowers, sight that evade,
And the nests of the birds, to the rock's secret place !
Here's Nera the heifer and the bull proud as Mars
That strayed while we careless plunged in fancy's wild maze !
And here the ripe corn-blades like gold spears for the wars !
And here the lights mellow of clear nights without haze,
With thy hand in my hand, when we gazed at the stars,
From the porch of the farm where the hearth was a-blaze !

CXXVIII. SONNET.—THE DIVINE ANTITHESIS.

Joséphin Soulary.

The knell rings sad from the belfry on high,
But with perfume shivers as drunken the breeze ;
Black drapes the church from the porch to the frieze,
But purple and gold have transfigured the sky ;
The procession solemn and hushed glides by,
But swallows float joyous over the trees ;
Tears fall wildly, and hearts heave like the seas,
But pearls rainbow-hued on leaves flashing lie.
Lo ! This is the place of repose as we trust,
Uttered are soft the prayers for the dead,
Return earth to earth and dust to the dust.
But the flowers bloom round and lift up their head,
And Nature immense is heard in each gust,
" Beauty new-born springs in light freely shed."

CXXIX. NI HAINE NI AMOUR.

Henri Heine.

Of girls unkind, though fair and stately,
This neighbourhood may count a score ;
From their hate I have suffered greatly,
But from their love oh more, still more.

In my brimming cup they have lately
Their poison shed, as oft before,
Hate-potions sometimes, and then straightly
Love-philters, that distress me sore.

But she whose name I love innately,
Who gave the wound that struck the core,
Moves tranquil on her way sedately,
Nor hate, nor love, she bears or bore.

CXXX. ON THE BARRICADE.

Victor Hugo.

(L'Année Terrible.)

'Twas upon a barricade in the street
With guilty blood polluted, but made clean
Again with pure blood, that a child of twelve
Was seized midst men with weapons in their hands.
" Art thou of these ?"—The child said,—" yes I am."
" Good," said the officer,—" thou shalt be shot,
Await thy turn." Then blinding flashes past
And his companions fell beneath the wall,
While he looked on. " Permit me that I go,"
Thus to the officer at last he said,
" And to my mother in our house, give back
This watch of hers."—" Ah, thou wouldst fly ?"—" Not so,

I shall return."—"These children of the street
Are cowards after all. Where lodgest thou?"—
"Down there beside the fountain,—let me go,
I shall come back 'monsieur le capitaine'."—
"Be gone thou rogue."—And the child scampered off.
Clumsy deceit,—gross cuninng of a boy!
And all the soldiers with their captain laughed,
And with the laughter mixed the rattle hoarse
That issues from the throats of men that die;
But the laugh ceased, for sudden he returned
Proud as Viala; step firm, and forehead high;
He looked a trifle pale, as on the wall
He like the others leaned, and cried aloud—
"Lo here I am."
Death brass-browed blushed with shame,
And the stern chief of pardon gave the sign.

I know not, child, amidst the present storm,
This hurricane around us, that confounds
The heroes and the bandits, good and ill,
What urged thee to the combat, but I say,
And boldly say, that thy soul ignorant
Is a soul tender, lofty and sublime.
As kind as brave, thou in the gulf's dark depths
Two steps couldst forward take instinctively,
One to thy mother, one as calm to death.
Childhood has candour, manhood has remorse;
And thou art not responsible for what
Thou wert induced to execute or try:
But true and brave the child is that prefers
To light, to life, to the bright dawn, to spring,
To sports permitted, and to all his hopes,
The sombre wall by which his friends have died.
Glory has kissed thy brow,—and thou so young!
Boy-friend, Stesichorus in antique Greece
Would willingly have charged thee to defend
A port of Argos. Cynégirus would have said,
'We are two equals that each other love.'

Thou wouldst have been admitted to the rank
Of the pure-minded Grecian volunteers,
By Tyrtœus at Messena, and at Thebes
By Æschylus. On medals would thy name
Have been engraved,—medals of brass or gold
To last for ages; and thou wouldst have been
Of those, who when they pass, beside the wells
Shaded by weeping willows, under skies
Serenely blue, cause the young girl that bears
The urn upon her shoulders, that the herd
Of panting kine may drink therein by turns,
To look round pensive, and to stand and gaze,
And gaze again,—then sigh, and onwards move.

CXXXI SONNET—NECESSITY.

Le Comte F. De Gramont.

Necessity or Fate, the day when thou
Shalt see this soul, where such dark clouds amass,
Renounce the struggle, and in desperate pass
For respite ask, lift up with pride thy brow.
For then to thee a combattant shall bow
That knows no fear, that trampled down like grass,
From weariness might yield indeed—alas!
But cannot be unfaithful to his vow.
Fly at such time from me belovëd Muse!
Hide my heart's ashes under thy disdain!
But on my hand disarmed, let fall a tear—
So much thou canst not, Poesy, refuse
To one, who loving thee 'mid grief and pain,
Has done his utmost to adore thee here.

CXXXII LA MÉNAGÈRE.

André Theuriet.

When the house-mistress comes in sight
Holy light
Enters the house wherein she dwells,
Crackle the brands, the flames rise proud,
And more loud
Repeats the bird his canticles.

In the great orchard every bough
Bending low
Salutes her with its wreath of flowers!
On her straw roofs the swallows build,
Faithful guild,
That herald luck and sunny hours!

Floats in her kingdom—(one large room!)
Soft perfume
That to the chance-guest's mind conveys
This thought,—lo! Plenty, Peace, Good-cheer,
All are here,
Thy lines are fall'n on pleasant ways.

A sober beauty,—pensive, grave,
Such as have
The mallow, scabious, and white rose!
Smooth dimpled cheeks, though somewhat pale,
Where prevail
The smiles that all her heart disclose!

Blue, like violets in a foss
Hemmed with moss,
Sparkle soft her innocent eyes,—
Frame-like her bonnet adds a grace
To a face
As calm and pure as summer skies!

Hair chestnut,—hardly one may view
There a few
Light threads of silver mixed between,—
Thin flakes of snow what eye perceives
'Mid the leaves
Of a vigorous tree and green!

She works beneath the lilac tree
Ceaselessly,
Her place is by the garden-gate,—
Swiftly her needle runs along,
While her song
Swells high and rich, and yet sedate.

And still attentive o'er her head
Branches spread,
As if to shield her and to bless,
And thick they shower their blossoms down
On her gown
To ornament her simple dress!

CXXXIII. TO LITTLE JEANNE.

Victor Hugo.

(L'Année Terrible.)

A year old, you were, my dear, yesterday,
Content to yourself you prattle away;
Opening its vague eyes in its sheltered nest
Thus chirps the bird new-born, by winds carest,
Joyous to feel its plumes commence to grow.
Jeanne your mouth is a rose-blossom in blow.
In those big books whose pictures are your joy,
Pictures you clutch, and sometimes too destroy,
There are sweet verses, but nought to compare
To your little face,—nothing half as fair!

It dimples with smiles like a summer lake
As I approach, my kiss wonted to take :
Poets the greatest have never written aught
As good, as in your eyes the budding thought.
Oh the reverie there, strange and obscure !
The contemplation, like an angel's pure !
Jeanne, God cannot be far, since you are here.

Ah ! You are a year old. It's an age, my dear.
Charmed with all things you look fitfully grave :
O moment celestial of life !—We rave
About happiness, but happy alone
Are those on whose path no shadow is thrown,
Who when their parents they hold in their arms,
Hold the whole world and feel sheltered from harms ;
Your young soul from Alice your kind mother turns
To Charles your father, and in them discerns
Matter for laughter, for tears, and for dreams ;
Their love is your all, and it sheds rainbow gleams
O'er your horizon. Your universe, your heaven,
Are in these,— one that rocks you at even,
And one that smiling looks on. At this hour,
The brightest of life, as light to the flower
Is their presence to you. O blessed trust !
In your parents you live, and this is but just.
I stand by humble grandsire ; not to grudge
To be your playmate, your slave, or your drudge ;
But content to follow you, and have my part
As one of your toys, somewhere in your heart ;
You come and I go ; awaiting for night
I hail and worship the dawn of your light.
Your blonde brother George and you are enough
To a heart not seared by the world's contact rough.
I see your glad sports and I wish for no more,
After my numberless trials are o'er,
Than that your shadow should fall on my tomb
While smiling you play 'mid sunshine and bloom.

Ah ! Our new innocent guest, you were born
In an hour for France most sad and forlorn,—
Familiar with terrors you played with the asp,
You smiled while Paris was at its last gasp,
You murmured, dear Jeanne, like bees in a wood,
While she girded her arms in wrathful mood ;
'Mid clank of the sword and roar of the gun
You woke and slept, as though danger were none ;
And when I see you, Jeanne, and when I hear
Your timid accents breaking low yet clear,
While your hands glide softly over my head,
It seems as if the cloud, charged with tempests dread,
Trembles and flies far off with hollow moan,
And that God sends down from His holy throne
To the Queen of cities girdled with towers
And ramparts from which the fierce cannon lowers,
Disabled, and ready to sink like a bark
Under a sea heaving wildy and dark,
Amid clamour, and terror, and outcry wild,
A blessing of Peace, by the hand of a child.

CXXXIV. THE BLACK POINT.

Gérard de Nerval.

Whoever has looked a long time at the sun,
Beholds in the welkin, where spot there is none,
A disk livid and strange, persistently float :

Thus young and audacious, mine eyes dared to gaze
On Glory one instant, and blind from the blaze,
Are destined the black spot for ever to note.

Since then, on all things, like a portent or sign
Like the seal on Cain's brow, in dark and in shine,
I see the mark spectral,—a black oriflamme :

A bar to my happiness ill I may brook !
Ah woe ! 'Tis the eagle alone that may look -
On the Sun and on Glory, undazzled and calm.

CXXXV. THE HISTORY OF A SOUL.

Eugène Manuel.

In secret from among the throng
God sometimes takes a soul,
And leads her slow, through grief and wrong,
Unswerving to her goal.

He chooses her to be His bride,
And gives her from His store,
Meek tenderness and lofty pride,
That she may feel the more.

He makes her poor, without a stay,
Desiring all men's good,
Searching the True, pure, pure alway,
But still, misunderstood.

Beneath a weight of pains and fears
He makes her often fall,
He nourishes her with bitter tears,
Unseen, unknown of all.

He spreads the clouds her head above,
He tries her hour by hour,
From Hate she suffers and from Love,
And owns of each the power.

God's rigour, never, never sleeps,
She waits for peace ? In vain.
She struggles or resignëd weeps,
He strikes and strikes again.

In beings that she loves the most,
He wounds her till half mad
She wanders like a restless ghost!
A problem strange and sad.

Thus stricken, reft of joy and light,
God makes her fair and clean,
Like an enamel hard and bright,
A sword of temper keen.

Subject to Adam's debt below
And every curse and pain,
The Judge inflexible would know
If she will staunch remain.

Will she fight on 'gainst every ill?
Brave every storm? Stand fast
Her lofty mission to fulfil
With courage to the last?

And when He sees her ever true,
Like needle to the pole,
Upon His work He smiles anew,—
Thus forges God a soul.

CXXXVI. THE DOVES.

Théophile Gautier.

On the hill-side,—up there,—close to the tombs,
A straight, straight palm-tree lifts proudly its head,
Like a warrior tall with green waving plumes;
There rest the white doves when daylight has fled.

But at the grey dawn they all quit the boughs,
Like a collar of pearls strown over the sky
They scatter in air; some wheel round the brows
Of hills, and some rest on the cottage roofs high.

My soul is the tree, where roost every night,
  Wild dreams in white swarms, I may not portray,
With tremulous wings from heaven they drop bright
  To vanish at morn—for ever away.

CXXXVII PROMENADES ET INTÉRIEURS.

François Coppée.

I.

In the eve, by the hearth, how oft in solitude
I have thought of some bird found dead, deep in the wood.
In the winter's rough days monotonous and sad,
The poor deserted nests once resonant and glad
Swing to the biting wind, 'neath a sky iron-grey.
Oh many the poor birds that must then die away!
But when the spring-time comes, the time of violets,
Their skeletons we meet not to awake our regrets,
Where in April we run, amid grass springing high;
Do the birds hide themselves in some nook ere they die?

II.

The school. The walls white, and the black benches in grade,
Then a Christ in wood carved, that two box branches shade;
The Sister of Mercy, a red rose in a cap,
Keeps the school with her clear eyes, and points to a map.
Some twenty girls lovely of the people sit round
In their plain simple bonnets. There's a hum of low sound.
O the good Sister! O the sweet patience she shows!
Weariness or anger, never, never she knows!
A hundred times over she repeats the same thing,
And her brow remains cloudless, her voice keeps its ring;
Nor cares she to note on the benches first ranged
Where the youngest have seats, stealthy glances exchanged;
For *there* marches on paper spread out and on book
A mav-bug made captive that attracts every look!

CXXXVIII. TO THE SWALLOW.

Sully Prudhomme.

Thou who canst mount up to the sky,
Not climbing first the summits steep
But at a bound, and who canst fly
Down to the valley's utmost deep ;

Thou who canst drink, not bending low
Beside the fount by which we kneel,
But from the clouds rain-freighted, slow,
Far, far above the earth that wheel ;

Thou who departest with the flowers,
And with the spring o'er ocean's foam
Returnest, faithful as the Hours
To two things, Liberty and Home ;

Like thee, my soul triumphant soars
On dream-wings borne by worlds of light ;
Like thee it stoops and skims the shores ;
Alike our tastes,—alike our flight !

A nest,—and power to range at will,
To thee are indispensable,
I need,—as wild mine instincts still,
Free life and love unchangeable.

CXXXIX. A MOTHER'S HEART.

Louis Ratisbonne.

"Poor mamma is very sick
Make no noise, my little child !
Not a cry, or naughty trick !
Doctor's orders " —Faint he smiled.

All was still. He never spoke.
Death came in the solemn night.

Dear friends wept when he awoke.
" Can I play now ? It is light. "

Pained the father turned away
While they dressed the child in black.
" Beautiful ! " He cried out gay,
" See mamma. " They held him back.

Sobbing rose papa at last,
Took him, wondering, unto her,
Life and breath away had past.
" O mamma ! " She did not stir.

" Put me on the bed, papa ! "
Choking, he with sobs and tears,
On the cold heart of mamma
Placed the child who felt no fears.

"See her—whose deep tenderness
Nourished thee,—look long and well !
Never more shall she caress,
Kiss, or hear, or stories tell !"

He was wrong. The lifeless heart
Soon as there was placed its joy,
'Gan to beat, and with a start
Woke mamma to clasp her boy.

CXL. SONNET.—THE MIRACLE OF THE VIRGIN.

Louis Ratisbonne.

A painter young was painting blessëd Mary
Upon a scaffold, so the legend goes,
High sprung the dome above, a dome of faëry,
Far down below the choir lay tinged with rose;
Of her rich gifts the muse had not been chary,
He loved his art and worked without repose,

But sleep surprised him in an hour unwary,
And the Bad Spirit that no pity knows
With jeering laughter hurled him from his height.
He woke—"Help, help O Virgin!"—And 'tis told
Out of the canvas stretched an arm of light
To save him. O ye fervent hearts be bold!
Sleep,—fall,—ye may, but never perish quite,
Your bright Ideal shall your steps uphold.

CXLI. THE SOWER.

Victor Hugo.

Sitting in a porchway cool,
Sunlight, I see, dying fast,
Twilight hastens on to rule,
Working-hours have well-nigh past.

Shadows run across the lands;
But a sower lingers still,
Old, in rags, he patient stands,
Looking on, I feel a thrill.

Black and high his silhouette,
Dominates the furrows deep!
Now to sow the task is set,
Soon shall come a time to reap.

Marches he along the plain
To and fro, and scatters wide
From his hands the precious grain;
Muse I, as I see him stride.

Darkness deepens. Fades the light.
Now his gestures to mine eyes
Are august; and strange,—his height
Seems to touch the starry skies.

CXLII. SONNET—A DREAM.

Sully Prudhomme.

The farmers told me, 'give us no command;
To make thy bread thine own fields cultivate;'
Weavers cried out, 'thy own cloth fabricate;'
And builders, 'take this trowel in thine hand;'
And lone, abandoned by the human band,
Bearing about me their relentless hate,
I prayed to Heaven their wrath to mitigate,
But it sent lions on my path to stand.
Here broke my dream. Another day had birth;
Hummed looms afar, fields sown appeared in ken,
And masons mounting ladders, sang in mirth:
I knew my happiness, and first felt then
None may dispense with other's help on earth,
And from that time I learned to love all men.

CXLIII. SONNET.—AUTUMN SUNSET.

Leconte de Lisle.

The wind of autumn has its course begun!
With lamentations strange and sad adieus
Like far sea-murmurs, in the avenues
It sways the heavy branches; these have won
A tinge of evening's rich vermilion,
And balanced, shed their leaves of various hues;
Look at these nests the birds no longer use!
And look—oh look at the departing sun!
Depart O Sun! Light's fountain! Nature's choice!
And let thy glory like a blood-stream pure
Flow from thy wounds, but in thy death rejoice!
Thou shalt arise again! Thy hope is sure!
But for a broken heart, with potent voice
Who shall again a lease of life procure?

CXLIV. REVERIE.

Auguste Lacaussade.

Tell me, O moving star, with wings of light
That floatest in the azure of the sky,
Where goest thou ? What goal is in thy sight ?
Wilt thou not furl thy wings somewhere on high ?

Tell me, O pensive moon, whom oft I mark,
Threading the milky way the heavens disclose,
In what strange cavern, luminous or dark,
Thou shalt at last, fair pilgrim, find repose ?

Tell me, O wind, that wanderest through space
Like a poor prodigal without hearth or home,
Is there for thee no quiet resting-place
In forest brown or on the ocean-foam ?

Tell me, O wave, that with a hungry roar
Lashest the mountains tow'ring by the deep,
Past the horizon line is there no shore
Where thou shalt glide serene and fall asleep ?

And thou, O heart, more wild than billow vext
Or fretful wind whose conflicts never cease,
Is there no spot in this world or the next
Where thou canst find forgetfulness and peace ?

CXLV. INTÉRIEUR.

A ma mère.

André Theuriet.

The parlour peaceful. In the chimney flames
A bright fire that attracts. Whistle the winds
Outside, and on the window-sash the rain
Beats with a noise of sobbing, wild and strange.
Cheerful a lamp, under its green shade, burns,
And bathes with mellow light a table large.

A rich vase full of after-season flowers
Exhales a perfume vague and soft, that steals
Like the familiar sound of some old air
Hummed by a voice beloved that dies away.
The father writes. The mother active, pale,
And thoughtful, as a mother always seems,
Covers a canvas wide with brave designs
Of variegated colors. One may see
Under her busy fingers as they move
Grow by degrees the tissue shaded fine
Of wool, red, black, orange and violet.
At the piano, seated in the midst,
Upon the ivory touches a young girl
Essays a piece preferred, then turns and smile
Her profile lightened by a single ray
Is proud, and full of noble sympathies,
And oh so pure !—An antique cameo cut
In agate ; one would say, the life-long work
Of some great master. Twenty blessed springs
Have o'er her past. The soul of music shines
In her clear eyes like a celestial fire,
And her pure forehead bears the seal of heaven,
And in bright bands her brown and silken hair
Falls on her shoulders white and smooth as snow.

Like a fresh wind among the willow boughs
Her fingers on the instrument mute till now
Modulate slowly a minuet air,
A soft air from Don Juan, dreamy, sad,
Yet full of passion ; the piano throbs
As if it were a living human soul !
And as at last in sobs the music bursts
The father leaves his papers and his pen
To look at her, and the fond mother drops
Her needle, drops the dainty flower sketched out
And leans across the table ; she scarce breathes
But silently looks on, like him entranced,
Until her glance meets his ; then smiles break forth,

And both contemplate with wet eyes the pearl,
The richest pearl their jewel-casket holds,
The pride of all the family,—the life,
The joy and sunshine of the house,—their child.

CXLVI. CHOIR OF SATYRS.

While Ulysses prepares to blind the eye of Polyphemus with a red-hot stake.

J. Autran.

Torment, like the lion ere its victim it seizes,
Awaits for the giant
Who with the flesh of a guest his hunger appeases,
Fierce, bloody, defiant.

Already, the fire sparkles, and the tree in the ashes
Becomes a red lever,
Sleep that descendest, press, oh press down the eyelashes
And seal them for ever.

And I, avenged and freed from this cavern infernal,
Shall worship thee daily,
O god of my youth, blithe, golden-haired and eternal,
With ivy decked gaily.

CXLVII. THE HOPE IN GOD.

Alfred De Musset.

There exists, it is said, a philosophy
That needs no revelation, but unlocks
The gates, with ease, that guard life's mystery,
And safely steers between the dangerous rocks
Indifference and Religion. Be it so.
Where are these system-makers that can find
Truth without faith? It would be worth to know.
Powerless sophists swelled with empty wind
What are their arguments? What authority

Are they invested with ? One proudly says,
Two principles exist for all eternity
That war on earth, by turns each strength displays
And triumphs o'er the other. One descries
Far in the solitary heavens a god
Who cares not, infinitely great and wise,
For human altars, or for man—a clod.
Pythagoras and Leibnitz think souls change;
Descartes forsakes us in the whirlwind's breast;
Montaigne enquires but nothing can arrange;
Pascal his own dream flies by fear possesst;
Pyrrho doubts all, and deems our natures blind;
Zeno makes us insensible; Voltaire
Throws down whatever stands with furious mind;
Spinosa leaves his subject in despair,
Searching in vain, he sees God everywhere,
Or deems he sees; the metaphysician Locke
Makes man a mere machine; at last to scare
All thinkers and their futile efforts mock,
And as it were the ruin to achieve
Of all philosophy, comes the German Kant,
A spectre in the fogs and clouds of eve,
Not without eloquence, but arrogant,
He sees heaven empty, and the end of all
Chaos and nothingness. Oh can it be !
Must human science tumble thus and fall ?
Is this the fate of proud philosophy ?
After five thousand years of cruel doubt,
After such bold and persevering toil,
Is that the last word ! Every hope shut out
Must speculation thus alas ! recoil !
Oh senseless efforts, miserable pains,
That sought the truth in such erratic rings !
Pinions we need to reach the heavenly plains,
What is the wish, without faith's eagle wings?
I pity you, O speculators wise !
Your wounded pride and torments have I known,

And felt the sudden shudder and surprise
Before the Infinite, as I stood alone!
Ah well!—Together let us pray, we must,
For all our labours have been vain we feel,
Or if your bodies be reduced to dust,
Let me upon your tombs devoutly kneel.
Come pagan sages, in all science great,
Dreamers bygone, and dreamers of to-day,
Prayer is a cry,—the cry of hope elate,
That God may answer us, oh let us pray!
Our pains and efforts note O Holy One!
The rest forget, O Merciful and True!
If heaven be empty prayer offend can none,
If some One hear us, may He pity too!

CXLVIII. MAN AND THE SEA.

Charles Baudelaire.

Man, in thy freedom, thou shalt love always the ocean
As the mirror in which is reflected thy soul,
For its infinite depths,—its waves in commotion,
Of thy spirit the phases, lay bare like a scroll.

To plunge in its waters, thy bosom rejoices,
As to clasp a dear mother rejoices a child!
And thy heart ceases to hear its own inner voices,
At the sound of that voice unconquered and wild.

O soul in the shadow thou ever abidest,
Who has sounded thy depths, and who there may regard?
And thou sea, who knows of the riches thou hidest,
Or has seen the dread secrets of thy dark dungeon-ward?

The same temperaments! And yet through the ages
Fierce, pitiless, remorseless, between you is strife!
Carnage, death, havoc, seem the work and the wages!
Eternal gladiators!—Brothers grappling for life!

CXLIX. CHRISTMAS.

Théophile Gautier.

The sky is dark, the snow descends,
Ring bells, ring out your merriest chime!
Jesus is born; the Virgin bends
Above Him. O the happy time!

No curtains bright-festooned are hung,
To shield the Infant from the cold;
The spider-webs alone are slung
Upon the rafters bare and old.

On fresh straw lies the little One,
Not in a palace but a farm,
And kindly oxen breathe upon
His manger-bed to keep it warm.

White wreaths of snow the roofs attire,
And o'er them stars the blue adorn,
And hark! In white the angel-quire
Sings to the shepherds, "Christ is born."

CL. SONNET—AVARITA.

Joséphin Soulary.

Voluntary martyr to eternal cares,
To bitter penury self-vowed, he asks
No pleasures, no kind kinsmen, nor the tasks
That please the patriot; and he never dares
To use the things he has, but onward fares
As though he had them not: a poor man basks
In sunshine sometimes, but the miser masks
His day's wants from himself;—till unawares,
As he recounts and grasps one day, his gold,
Sudden he starts to hear an unknown voice,
"Ho, knave! Take nothing hence, let go thy hold!

Empty thy left hand now! Thou couldst rejoice
To hear the orphan's cry,—the widow's sob,
But wouldst thou Death, O fool, deceive and rob?"

CLI. THE SWORD OF ANGANTYR.

Leconte De Lisle.

Angantyr, in his low earth-bed, pale, stiff, and grave,
Beyond reach of the moon-gleam and fierce glare of the sun,
With the sword in his hand, a sleep peaceful has won,
For the fierce eagles have spared the flesh of the brave,
And the heather has drunk the red blood that had run.

On the black cape's summit, where the ocean waves moan
Stands Angantyr's child. Avenger none has been found
For the dead who reposes beneath the high mound;
So Hervor, her fair breasts bruised by thicket and stone,
Disturbs the slain hero with her clamour alone.

"Angantyr! Angantyr! 'Tis thine Hervor who calls!
O chief whose proud galleys ploughed the foam of the sea,
Give thy sword iron-hilted that bright flashed, unto me,
It rests on thy breast, but its name yet appals,
For it was forged by the dwarfs of Ymer for thee."

"My child, my child, why dost thou in darkness thus shriek
Like a gaunt famished she-wolf that howls by a tomb?
The earth and the granite press me down in this gloom;
My closed eyes see only an immensity bleak,
And thy cry thrills my heart like the trumpet of doom."

"Angantyr! Angantyr! On this high promontory
The tempest fierce whirling, far away bears my sobs,
And thy name, O warrior, in the wave's music throbs,
Hear me, answer me, from thy dark bed and gory,
And break from thy prison for thy glory it robs."

"My child, O my daughter, do not trouble my dream!
If the body is bound, the spirit soars like a song!
Ha! I drink hydromel in the cup of the strong,
In the heaven of Valhalla my glave adds a gleam,
But the voice of the living to the dead is a wrong."

"Angantyr! Angantyr! Give, oh give me thy sword;
Thy children save myself welter naked in blood,
And fishes devour them in the river's red flood;
Sole escaped of thy race from the foemen's fierce horde
Let me wear the bright glave that none ever withstood."

"My child, O my child, let us remain what we are,
Befits well the distaff a young maiden's fair hand;
Hence! Depart! Lo, on thy path, the moon rises grand!
For a man is the sword, and the tumult of war,
But a fight foot to foot no woman may stand."

"Angantyr! Angantyr! Hark! My birth-right I claim!
O warrior, revile not thy own race in this way,
I long for the murderer's blood and the fray.
Help me,—or by Fenris,—perish, perish thy name!
May thy bones be dragged out by the wolf as a prey!"

"My child, O my child, thy soul is lofty and great,
The child of a hero must thus speak and thus feel,
And clean his dimmed honor till it shine like this steel,
Take the sword, O my loved, and be reckless of fate,
Run, avenge me, and die, where the trumpets loud peel."

Angantyr lifting up the high mound of his tomb
Like a spectre, with eyes without vision that stare,
Rises up and extends forth an arm wan and bare
Whence the sword iron-hilted, drops down in the gloom,
And his white teeth low mutter,—"Now take it, nor spare."

And while he sinks slowly on the couch of the dead,
And recrosses his arms and earth's glory resigns,
Hervor, brandishing the steel that vibrates and shines,
With her black hair wild streaming,—a phantom of dread,
Runs,—leaps,—disappears in the forest's dark lines.

CLII. LE CONVOI D'UNE PAUVRE FILLE.

Auguste Brizeux.

When poor Louise died in her fifteenth year,
A wood-flower killed by the wind and the rain,
No numerous cortège followed her bier,
A priest and a boy composed all the train.
From time to time the acolyte replied
To the prayers with responses soft and low.
Louise was friendless, and nobody cried,
And Louise was poor, so none made a show.
A simple cross of box, an old, old pall,
This was the pomp around her funeral bed ;
And when the sexton bore her past the hall
Unto the lowly dwellings of the dead,
Hardly the village from the bell could learn
Its sweetest virgin had retired from earth.
So died she humble.—By the hills where fern
Abundant grew, 'neath trees of ample girth,
By balmy vales and corn-fields rich and green,
And through the broom, at dawn of glorious day
The convoy winded. April, like a queen,
In all her splendour, made a proud display,
And on the virgin bier in tenderness
Snowed down her flowers, and bathed it with her tears ;
The white-thorn had put on its gorgeous dress
Of rose and white ; and levelled rays like spears
Touched the star-blossoms on each branch that shook.
Full was the prospect of perfume and song ;
Flowers all the way,—as far as eye could look,
And hidden birds, that warbled loud and long.

CLIII WHAT THE SWALLOWS SAY.

Théophile Gautier.

Leaves not green, but red and gold,
Fall and dot the yellow grass,

Morn and eve, the wind is cold,
Sunny days are gone, alas!

Showers lift bubbles on the pool,
Peasants harvest-work dispatch,
Winter comes apace to rule,
Swallows cluster on the thatch:

Hundreds, hundreds of the race
Gathered, hold a high debate;
One says,—"Athens is my place,
Thither shall I emigrate.

"Every year I go and build
On the famous Parthenon,
Thus the cornice-hole is filled,
Mark of an insulting gun."

"Smyrna suits my humbler needs"—
Says a second, twittering gay,
"Hadjis there count amber beads
Sitting in the sun's bright ray.

"In a café's little room
Where chibouks a vapour raise,
Floating 'mid the strange perfume
Turbans shall I skimming graze."

"Balbeck triglyphe that I love,
Thee again,"—says one,—"I seek,
There shall I hang soon above
Little ones with open beak."

One cries out;—"Lo! my address!
Rhodes, the palace of the knights,
Year by year, my nest I tress
On the black-stone pillar heights."

Says a fifth;—"Old age, you see,
Weighs me down, I scarce can fly;

Malta's terraced rock for me!
Azure wave and azure sky!"

And the sixth ;—" In Cairo fair
On a lofty minaret,
Mud head-quarters lined with hair
Make me winter quite forget. "

" At the second cataract,—"
Says the last ;— " 'mid beauties brown
Is my nest. The place exact
Is a granite monarch's crown. "

All : " To-morrow many miles
File by file, we shall have gone.
Peaks of snow, and plains, and isles,
Vanish far,—yet on,—still on ! "

Twinkling bright their eyes of jet,
Clapping wings, in brotherhood,.
Twitter thus, the swallows met
When the rust is on the wood.

All they say I understand,
For the poet is a bird,
Captive, broken-winged, and banned,
Struggling still, though oft unheard.

Oh ! For wings, for wings, for wings!
As sings Ruckert in his song,
To fly with the birds and the springs
Wherever the sun shines long.

CLIV. LANDSCAPE.

Georges Lafenestre.

On the wet plateau of the sandy shore,
Where green sea-weeds their own sad fate deplore,

Left by the tide's forgetful wave to rot,
When it receded murmuring from the spot,
Bulls with broad dewlaps, cows in careworn plight,
Heifers that startle at the curlew's flight,
With solemn steps, and balancing their heads,
Dull, as reluctant to forsake their beds
Of straw, descend, preceded one by one,
By their long shadows in the risen sun ;
Around the black reefs ranged along the creek
The herd dispersed, kneel noiseless, docile, meek,
And to the salt wind from the sea that blows,
With wide dilated nostrils tinged with rose,
Voluptuous turn large eyes, they half unclose.
It seems, as if the sea in pensive mood
To rock Life's rest, hath changed its manner rude,
And hardly dares upon the silver sand
To roll its waves except with murmurs bland.
Unwrinkled, like a forehead without care,
It spreads in peace, and hills that rise in air
In a horizon limpid, scattered grand,
Gird it in part, like a transparent band,
A veil of azure that shall float away
When the wind rises with the rising day.
Opens above, the blue, blue firmament,
Where large and pale but yet magnificent
The sun is seen,—lord of eternal light !
Seagulls traverse his rays, in long, long flight.
The sea and sky forgetting that they seal
Snows, and fierce waves, that make the navies reel,
Without a threat to-day, or surge, or cloud,
Call on each other. Well may both be proud
To blend the depths of their serenity,
Symbol as each is of eternity !
And earth that suffers, earth that men degrade,
Pleased with the splendour everywhere displayed,
Seems almost, like a child surprised, to fear
This dream of happiness may disappear

Too quickly from its sight. In sheltering boughs
Birds waken and repeat their songs and vows;
The fishers, humming, on the steep white rock
March two and two, and careful of their stock
Hang upon rusty hooks their humid nets
Whence shivering vapours rise. By rivulets
On which the elm-trees lean, near roofs of thatch,
A Babel of young voices, or a snatch
From some old ballad, or sweet laughter shrill,
Shows where the girls bleach clothes beside a mill;
Rough wooden shoes upon the pebbles sound;
Old dames with busy feet the wheel turn round;
And 'mid these songs of women, birds and springs,
The murmurs of the flowers that ask for wings,
The cries, inexpressively soft and sweet
Of infants waking in their snug retreat,
Half-naked,—while their mothers hang above
Their cradle-beds and utter words of love,—
In the deep calm, and thoughtful joy, that reign,
Sudden is heard along the humid plain,
Like a voice sent from heaven with day new-born,
To make the unknown future less forlorn,
The low, low rustle of the ripening corn.

CLV. THE SWAN.

Sully Prudhomme.

Where like a mirror, spreads the glorious lake
Profound and calm, behold, the swan awake
A noiseless ripple, as serene she glides!
How beautiful the down upon her sides!
It seems its dazzling whiteness to have won
From April's snows bright-flashing in the sun;
But of a duller white appears the wing
That vibrates in the mild breath of the spring,

Proud of its strength. Above the tangled reeds
She lifts her neck, then plunges it, and feeds,—
Then lengthens it upon the wave, then swerves,
Arching its outline in acanthus curves
Where aye the line of beauty she preserves.
Now in her shining silver throat or breast
Her ebon beak, half-hidden, is at rest;
Now moves she under pines of sombre shade
Where Peace and Silence have pavilions made;
Now winds, abandoning the herbs, her fare
That trail behind like thick and glossy hair,—
With languid movements, graceful, stately, slow,
To any goal where fancy bids her go.
The grotto where the poet loves to dream,
And hears high mysteries in evening's gleam,
The fount that mourns one absent or at rest
With an eternal murmur,—please her best;
Here, while she moves or lingers by the hour,
Perchance a willow leaf, or faded flower,
Drops on her shoulder in the shadow dim;
Sometimes from woods obscure, away to swim
She feels a pleasure,—then superb and grand
She rides into the open,—far from land;
Her own white purity better to admire
She chooses just the spot that seems on fire
Beneath the sun's fierce, red, and blinding rays,
There, incandescent, like a ship she sways.
Then, when the water's edge no more is seen
At twilight's witching hour, and all between
Are spectral vapours, lines confused, and shapes
Chaotic, and in black the blue sky drapes,
Save in one point of the horizon, whence
Shoots forth a long, long streak of red intense;
Then, when no reeds, no waterlilies stir,
And birds commence their songs upon the fir
Far, far away, and glow-worms light their spark
Beneath the moon just rising in the dark;

Then, when the lake more deep, more sombre, shows
A sky beneath, dark-violet, where glows
The milky way, the splendor of each star,
And all that meets the gaze above,—afar ;
Like a bright silver vase 'mid diamonds strown,
With her head buried in her wings,—alone,
She sleeps, between two firmaments dim-seen,
A queen of beauty,—Nature's chosen queen.

CLVI. NIGHT.

Mme E. de Girardin.

(Delphine Gay.)

This is the hour. The veil is rent
That hides my sorrows in the day ;
Opens my heart. Night-flowers their scent
Thus open at the first star's ray.

O Night, Night lovely and profound !
Thou know'st if worthy be of faith,
The judgments rash with which men hound
A stricken hind that bleeds to death.

Thou know'st the secret of my life !
The courage gay to do and dare,
The seeming calmness,—hides no strife,
'Tis an acceptance of despair !

For thee, I am myself again,
No more hypocrisy or guile !
I live, I love, I suffer pain,
My sadness wears not e'en a smile.

No more the rose and lily crown !
My brow resumes its mourning wreath ;
Weary my throbbing head hangs down,
Tumbles the pride assumed, beneath.

My tears, long time, too long, held back,
Force through my fingers and intrude,
Like fountains that create a track
Through the dead branches in a wood.

After a day of hard constraint,
Of folly and of vanity,
To languish without any feint,
Seems sweet to my humanity.

Oh! There's a bitter joy alway
In liberty to bear our pangs,
And yield ourselves,——a willing prey
To sorrow's torturing deathful fangs.

A bitter joy, to drain the spring
Of tears unto the lowest drop,
Vanquished,——from fierce despair to wring
Its last word or its final sob.

For then, oh then, the glutted grief
Leaves a vague rest to hearts it shook,
From life no more we seek relief
But to the Ideal only look.

We wheel in space, we float, we swim,
By Evenings's Spirit rendered free,
We change to fleeting shadows dim
That hover in immensity.

From death delivers and from shame
This freedom with resistless force;
We bear on earth no more a name,
We dream all dreams without remorse.

Nothing of this deceiving earth,
Nor bonds, nor laws, nor griefs remain,
The soul receives a second birth
And feels no more Imposture's pain.

Like a celestial butterfly
Its own flower it can blameless choose,
It reasserts its nature high,
And shakes off exile's slime and ooze.

O Night—the sombre and the bright
In thee I find all, all in sooth,
For thou unitest gloom with light
And weddest Mystery with Truth.

But peace! The cold winds whistle clear,
The east reveals a streak of grey,
Adieu,—adieu, O thoughts sincere,
And welcome lies. Here comes the day!

CLVII. ROMANCE.

Chateaubriand.

Sweet, Oh sweet, is thy memory
My birth-place hid in greenery!
My sister, how the days seemed fair
When we
First breathed of France the liberal air
Down there!

Dost thou like me remember clear,
How oft while we the hearth stood near,
Our mother clasped us, nothing loth,
My dear?
And we her hair, with answering troth
Kissed both?

Dost thou remember, proud and hoar
The chateau by the river Dore,
And fairer still, the turret high
Of More,
Whence bells proclaimed to earth and sky
Day nigh?

Dost thou remember too the lake
Whose calm the swallows skimmed to break,
While reeds by zephyrs wooed and won
Would shake,
And sank, his course of glory done,
The sun?

Oh, who shall give me Helen back!
The great oak and the mountain-track;—
Though sorrow hang the passing day
In black,—
One landscape shall rich hues array
For aye!

CLVIII DANTE.

Auguste Barbier.

Dante, old Gibelin! when I see only in passing
The plaster white and dull of this mask so puissant
That Art has bequeathed us of thy features majestic,
I cannot help feeling a slight shudder O poet!
So strongly the hand of genius and that of misfortune
Have imprinted upon them the dark seal of sorrow.
Under the narrow cap that on thine ears closely presses,
Is it Time's mark, or the furrow of thought and of vigils
That traverses thy forehead with laborious indenture?
Was it in fields of exile in thy dark degradation
That thy mouth closed thus tightly, as after deep curses?
Thy last thought, is it in this smile sinister apparent?
The smile that Death on thy lips has nailed with his fingers.
Ah! Disdain suits well the mouth of a man such as Dante,
For the daylight dawned on him in a city most ardent,
And his natal pavement was made of flint and of gravel
That tore a long time the soles of his feet ever restless.
Dante, saw like us, daily, human passions in conflict
Roll around him with fortunes strange, sudden, and diverse;
He saw the citizens cut each other's throats in madness;

The parties crushed, spring up again one after another;
He beheld on the scaffold the torch applied to the victims;
He saw during thirty years pass of crime the wild surges;
And the word 'Fatherland' flung to the winds of all quarters
Without profit for the people or the cause of fair freedom.
O Dante Alighieri of Florence! Poet immortal!
I understand to-day, thy sufferings poignant and deathful!
O lover of Beatrice,—to exile condemned from thy country,
I understand that eye hollow, and that gaunt forehead wrinkled,
The disgust of the things of this world, the terrible heartache
Endless,—the hatred profound and all but eternal,
That in whipping up thy humours made thee atrocious,
And flooded thy pen and thy heart with bitterness savage.
Thus, after the manners of thy town, manners long vanished,
Artist, thou paintedst a canvas that holds us still spell-bound,
A picture of perversity,—of the loosed human passions,
With such energy, such grandeur, such truth, and such courage,
That little children who saw thee by day in Ravenna,
Traversing some plain lonely, or some street in the distance,
Cried out in contemplating thy brow livid and clouded,
'Lo! Lo! The man that comes back from the regions infernal.'

CLIX. THE WILLOWS.

Nicolas Martin.

I love the willow's mossy trunk,
That bends beside the river!
Sprays veil its shoulders rough and shrunk
And o'er the waters quiver.

Arid it looks, and gaunt, and stark,
As slant it forward presses,
Time hardens into scales its bark
But crowns its brow with tresses.

Upon its mosses taking root
Green herb and blossom ruddy

A picture form, as up they shoot,
That painters long might study.

Neglected, frail of frame, deep-scarred,
It typifies the poet!
A dream of spring both love to guard
And each is proud to show it.

In childhood's days of joy intense
O willow old and hoary!
How oft thy twigs through hedge and fence
I've gathered in their glory.

How oft the bark with fingers light
In Flanders' towns medieval,
I've shaped to flutes that shepherds might
Have used in times primeval.

There, willow-slips the garden green
Enclose and keep in order,
And for the fields of flax and bean
They make a simple border.

On willow trunks in summer still
The birds delight to warble;
And when the snows their hollows fill
Those trunks seem Parian marble.

When axes wound the withered shoots
In autumn's groves decaying,
Alone the owl amid them hoots
The chidren's hearts affraying.

But oh,—in spring when leaf and bud
Press forth to new expansion,
And colours bright all quarters stud,
The birds find back their mansion.

Nor birds alone,—for, generous trees
Not niggard in bestowing!

To all are free your treasuries,
Abundant and o'erflowing.

The child that wants a pliant twig
To weave a tiny basket,
The wren that wants for seat a sprig,
Not even have to ask it.

The traveller that the shade would gain
May here repose securely,
The steed, when hungry, may attain
The crisp new foliage surely.

I love the willow's mossy trunk
That bends beside the river!
Sprays veil its shoulders rough and shrunk
And o'er the waters quiver.

CLX. ON THE DEATH OF HIS DAUGHTER.

Victor Hugo.

Oh, I was wild like a madman at first,
Three days I wept bitter tears and accurst;
O those whom God of your hope hath bereft!
Fathers and mothers like me lonely left!
Have ye felt what I felt, and known it all?
And longed to dash your heads on the wall?
Have ye been like me in open revolt,
And defied the Hand that had hurled the bolt?
I could not believe at all in the thing,
I gazed, and I gazed, for a light to spring.
Does God permit such misfortunes, nor care
That our souls be filled with utter despair?
It seemed as the whole were a frightful dream,
She could not have left me thus like a gleam;

Ha ! That is her laughter in the next room !
Oh no, she cannot be dead in the tomb.
There shall she enter,—come here by this door,
And her step shall be music to me as before.

Oh ! How oft have I said,—silence,—she speaks,
Hold,—'tis her hand on the key, and it creaks,
Wait—she comes !—I must hear,—leave me,—go out,
For she *is* in this mansion, somewhere without doubt.

CLXI. THE DREAM OF LUCRETIA.

François Ponsard.

I dreamt I entered in a sacred temple
Amidst a crowd. It might be said that Rome
Pressed to this single spot to its last man,
And that to give access to all this throng,
The human wave that ever, ever grew,
The temple-walls went on enlarging still.
Then, unto Romulus our common sire
To render him propitious to the land
The Quirinal Priest prepared to sacrifice.
The chosen victim by the altar stood,
Its skin already strown with flour and salt ;
Wine from the vase was sprinkled on the front
Where have their base the formidable horns ;
And the Priest uttered in his solemn voice
The prayer :—" O God Quirinus, we entreat
Of these libations thine acceptance. Grant
That Rome amongst the nations be supreme."
He ceased, and silence reigned in that vast hall.
Shivered, in expectation every soul :
When suddenly a strudent voice was heard
At which the temple trembled, as with fear.

"Far, far from me these offerings! Shall I drink
The blood of beasts? I long for human blood.
The pure blood of a woman must be shed.
Then shall your prayers be heard, and Rome be great."
Thus spake the god,—and in that very time
Vanished the victim, in some way unknown,
And on the altar I,—I found myself
Stretched in its place, awaiting for the axe
Suspended. There I lay, with blanching cheek
Paler and paler as the minutes passed,
Until a pillar opening, out there came
A deadly serpent. Crawling it advanced
Drawing along the flags its glittering rings
Proud of their rich resplendence, moving slow,
And slower still, as certain of its prey.
It neared,—it rose,—and on my body frail
Coiled its chill, slimy, almost frozen length.
My hair stood up with fright, my flesh
Crept with the horror of that humid clasp,
My voice was strangled in my arid throat,
I tried to fly, I could not even move,
Fixed with wild terror and deep loathing there,
Spell-bound and fascinated. Like an arm
Of flexile iron winding round and round
The hideous monster wrapt me in its folds,
Tightening its grasp obdurate, more and more;
Then raised its head, from whence a fiery tongue
Keen as a glave, like lightning darted forth.
It fixed its eyes like torches, on my eyes,
It breathed upon my face an odour strange,
An odour of the tomb. The fiery tongue
Tasting in hope beforehand human blood
Ran o'er my frame still motionless and cold
Meditating the deadly wound.—Then came
A rush of darkness, and I saw no more
Nor felt I aught.....My torturer had fled
Leaving a sword deep-buried in my heart.

And wonder new! The rapid streaming drops
That from the wound fell down upon the stones,
Gave birth in falling to battalions armed,
More close than on the furrows serried corn,
More numerous than the desert's endless sands,
And all the combattants had an air superb
And carried for their ensigns, not the rods
Knotted together, but tall brazen pikes
Surmounted with an eagle each of gold,
That menaced South and East and West and North.
At last, I starting woke and sat upright
Full of my frightful dream, so full indeed,
That I believed I felt within my heart
The sharp cold of the glave deep-buried still.

CLXII. SONNET.—THE PYRENEES.

Du Bartas.

Frenchman! Stop there, nor pass that open plain
Girdled with rocks by Nature, on one side,
Cut by the Auriège with its rushing tide,
And dowered with beauty like a queen to reign.
What thou beholdest is no mountain-chain,
That is Briáreus, towering up in pride
To guard the vale and sharply to divide
Spain from fair France, and France from swarthy Spain.
To each he tenders a fraternal hand,
And bears old Atlas' load upon his head;
His feet on two seas planted, mark him stand!
His dark locks are the forests over-spread;
His ribs the rocks; his sweat the rivers grand;
The fabled son of Cœlus is not dead.

CLXIII. LES HURLEURS.

Leconte de Lisle.

The sun in the billows had extinguished its flame,
Under mountains fog-covered, slept peaceful the town,
On the huge boulders, washed by a foam-cloud, low down,
Dashed the ocean in thunder its power to proclaim.

Night multiplied the long hollow tumult of sound!
Not a star shone forth in the immensity blue,
Only a moon mournful, its cloud-bars breaking through,
Like a pale lamp, swung sad in the welkin profound.

Silent globe with a sign on its forehead of wrath!
Debris of a world dead, flung at hazard in space!
It shed from its orb frozen of faint light a trace
Sepulchral, on the South Ocean's limitless path.

Afar, towards the north, where the vapours hung deep,
Africa, sheltering herself in the night's sombre bands,
Her gaunt lions famished on the smoking dull sands,
And her herds of elephants, by lakes lulled to sleep.

On the shores arid, amid insalubrious smells
Of bones of oxen and steeds all scattered about,
Lean dogs, here and there, lengthened their fierce muzzles out
And joined in lugubrious demoniac yells.

The tail in a circle concealed under the form,
The eyes wide dilated, the feet febrile, they stood,
Or crouched down as they howled in that drear solitude,
While o'er them a shudder swept at times like a storm.

The sea-foam, in showers, glued to their spines and their hips
Long tangles, and made salient the vertebres bare,
And when the waves to attack them bounded in air
Their white teeth gnashed under their red slavering lips.

In the gleams faint and ghastly of the moon on her range,
What an anguish unknown by the billows dim-seen,

Made a soul shriek and lament in your figures unclean,
Why howled you thus, spectres, frighted, frightful and strange?

I know not; but O dogs that howled wild on the shore!
Though suns after suns, in the seas, since, have been cast,
I hear still resounding from the depths of my past
Your cry of despair, and it shall ring evermore.

CLXIV. AFTER THE BATTLE.

Victor Hugo.

My sire, the hero with the smile so soft,
And a big trooper, his companion oft,
Whom he loved greatly for his courage high
And strength and stature, as the night drew nigh
Rode out together. The battle was done.
The dead strewed the field. Long sunk was the sun.
It seemed in the darkness a sound they heard,
A feeble moan or some half-uttered word.
'Twas a Spaniard from the army in flight
Who had crawled to the road after the fight;
Shattered and livid and more than half dead,
Rattled his throat as quite faintly he said:—
"Water—water to drink, for pity's sake!
Oh—a drop of water my thirst to slake!"
And my father moved at these words heart-wrung,
The gourd of rum at his saddle that hung
To the trooper handed, who sharp down sprung.
"Let him drink his fill,"—cried my father;—and ran
The trooper to the sorely wounded man,
A sort of Moor, swarthy, bloody, and grim;—
But soon as the trooper had bent o'er him
He seized a pistol, turned fiercely about
And aimed at my father's head with a shout.

The ball passed so near that its whistling sound
He heard, while his cap fell pierced to the ground,
And his steed reared back with terror aghast,—
" Give him the drink, " cried my father, and past.

CLXV. TO PEPA.

Alfred de Musset.

Pépa, when the night has come
And mamma has bid ' good-night, '
By thy light, half-clad and dumb,
As thou kneelest, out of sight ;

Laid by cap and sweeping vest,
Ere thou sinkest to repose,
At the hour when half at rest
Folds thy soul as folds a rose ;

When sweet Sleep, the sovereign mild
Peace to all the house has brought,
Pépita, my charming child,
What, oh what is then thy thought ?

Who knows ! Haply dreamest thou
Of some lady doomed to sigh ;
All that Hope a truth deems now,
All that Truth shall prove—a lie.

Haply of those mountains grand
That produce, alas ! but mice,
Castles in Spain,—a prince's hand,
Bonbons, lovers, or cream-ice.

Haply of soft whispers breathed
'Mid the mazes of a ball,
Robes, or flowers, or hair enwreathed,
Me,—or nothing, dear, at all.

CONCLUDING SONNET.

À mon Père.

The flowers look loveliest in their native soil
Amid their kindred branches ; plucked, they fade,
And lose the colours Nature on them laid,
Though bound in garlands with assiduous toil.
Pleasant it was, afar from all turmoil,
To wander through the valley, now in shade
And now in sunshine, where these blossoms made
A Paradise, and gather in my spoil.
But better than myself no man can know
How tarnished have become their tender hues
E'en in the gathering, and how dimmed their glow !
Wouldst thou again new life in them infuse,
Thou who hast seen them where they brightly blow ?
Ask Memory. She shall help my stammering Muse.

NOTES.

NOTES.

I. The sleep of the condor. Leconte de Lisle the author of this piece is a creole born in the Mauritius. A notice of his works by the writer of these pages will be found in the Bengal Magazine, edited by the Rev. Lal Behari Day, for the month of December 1874.

II. Sonnet. Le comte F. de Gramont is one of the best of the modern poets of France. He has written many sonnets in Italian.

III. The peasant's dilemma. This piece will be found in the popular collection called *La Lyre Francaise* by Gustave Masson.

IV. The young captive. The heroine of this well-known poem by André Chénier, who was himself a victim of the Revolution, was the beautiful Aimeé de Coigny, Duchess de Fleury.

V. Sonnet. This sonnet by Felix Arvers has been praised by the highest authorities, amongst others by Sainte-Beuve and Jules Janin, for its grace, delicacy and passion. It is far superior to the other pieces of Arvers which rarely rise above mediocrity.

VI. Après le coup d'état. Most readers know that Victor Hugo, perhaps the greatest of living poets, retired from France after the notorious *coup d'état* of Napoleon III, and that he now resides under the flag of England in the little island of Jersey.

VII. Lines. See the preceding note.

VIII. Sonnet.—The two processions. Joséphin Soulary's sonnets are among the best in the language. They are elaborated with great care. Each is a pastoral picture, or a little drama of exquisite beauty. He has been called and deservedly the Petrarch of France.

IX. The emigration of Pleasure. This piece will be found in Gustave Masson's *La Lyre Francaise.*

X. My vocation. This song was a great favourite of Thackeray. The reader may perhaps remember his reference to it in his lecture on Goldsmith, and his quotation of the opening lines as peculiarly applicable to that poet :—

"Jeté sur cette boule,
Laid, chetif, et souffrant ;
Etouffé dans la foule,
Faute d'être assez grand ;
Une plainte touchante
De ma bouche sortit ;
Le bon Dieu me dit : Chante,
Chante, pauvre petit !"

XI. Béranger to the Academy. In reference to the expressions "fiddler" and "low-born" in the first stanza of this poem, it is necessary to remember that Béranger claimed them himself,—"ménétrier," and "vilain et tres-vilain." About the first, the words of Lamartine are worthy to be quoted,—"le ménétrier dont chaque coup d'archet avait pour cordes les cœurs de trente-six millions d'hommes exaltés ou attendris,"—"the fiddler whose fiddle-stick had for chords the heart-strings of thirty-six millions of men exalted or melted ;" and about the second, Béranger's own lines are worthy to be committed to memory.

"Hé quoi ! J'apprends que l'on critique
Le *de* qui précède mon nom,
Etes-vous de noblesse antique ?
Moi noble ! Oh ! vraiment, messieurs, non.
Non, d'aucune chevalerie
Je n'ai le brevet sur vélin,
Je ne sais qu'aimer ma patrie—
Je suis vilain et très-vilain."

XII. Epigram.—Against La Bruyère. Jean de La Bruyère—the author of the Caractères.

XIII. The sleeping beauty. See note to piece No. LX.

XIV. Sonnet. Liré—"a small town in the Department of Maine et Loire" is the birthplace of Du Bellay who was the author of "a collection of small pieces called Les Regrets which have obtained for him the surname of the French Ovid."

XV. Epigram.—Against Maupou. The author of this epigram is not known.

XVI. Sonnet. Paul Scarron is called by M. Gustave Masson the Homer of grotesque literature. "His infirmities authorised him to call himself *un raccourci des misères humaines.*" He was the first husband of Madame Maintenon.

XVII. To a certain marchioness. There is a story not very well authenticated, regarding this piece which is perhaps worth mention. In the salon of the Duchess de Bouillon a young lady once smilingly asked amidst a shower of pleasantries,—what is the plant that best adorns ruins? Madame de Motteville, the celebrated authoress of the Memoirs, and a friend of Corneille, had ivy in her hair, and all eyes turned naturally towards her. Thereupon Corneille, who was present, wrote the verses on behalf, and as it were in the place of his friend, and gave them to the young lady on the spot.

XVIII. The young girl. Charles Nodier was born at Besançon in 1783 and died in 1844. His strength lay in prose more than in poetry. His stories are charming, and remind one very much of Washington Irving. His "Souvenirs" also are very interesting. A very graphic account of his life and works has been given by Alexander Dumas who was a personal friend of his. Nodier travelled in England and Scotland, and some verses addressed by him to Sir Walter Scott after a visit, will be found in one of the earlier numbers of Blackwood's Magazine.

XIX. The lost path. André Lemoyne was born at St. Jean-d'Angély about 1823. "Honorable and independent"—says a French critic,—"as well as discreet and modest, his life flows in the midst of his family and his friends in the practice of duty and the worship of his art." Admitted as a barrister, he renounced practice and contented himself with an employment in the well-known house of M. Didot. Lemoyne

has not written much, but what little he has written is worthy of high praise. Besides the piece we translate here, there are others which may be read with pleasure, and amongst these we may name " Ecce Homo " and " Une larme de Dante."

XX. The oxen. Pierre Dupont is the poet of the sorrows and joys of the poor. He is not a scholar, and there is not much art in his poetry, but he has great natural gifts which compensate for all his deficiencies. His " Chant des ouvriers " has long been popular, and if the reader reads French at all, he must have come across—

" Mal vêtus, logés dans des trous,
Sous les combles, dans les décombres,
Nous vivons avec les hiboux
Et les larrons amis des ombres :
Cependant notre sang vermeil
Coule impétueux dans nos veines ;
Nous nous plairions au grand soleil,
Et sous les rameaux verts des chênes !"

XXI. Colinette. Very sweet in the original. Author unknown. The piece will be found in Gustave Masson's " La Lyre Francaise."

XXII. The poet's apology for his short poems. Nicolas Martin is deeply imbued with the grand poetry of Germany. He was born at Bonn, and his mother was a German lady,—a sister of the poet Karl Simrock the learned translator into modern language of the old and magnificent Nibelungen, which Victor Hugo considers to be one of the three great epics of the world,—the other two being the Mahabharatha and the Ramayana. M. Martin's landscapes are very beautiful, and his German leanings have not spoiled his French at all. It is very clear and idiomatic, and as a French critic has observed, it proves " qu'il est bien des nôtres—un vrai fils de la France."

XXIII. Young and old. See the preceding note.

XXIV. The Grand Pint. M. A de Châtillon is a painter as well as a poet, a fact which a careful reader of his poetry would perhaps discover without being told. A beautiful portrait of M. Victor Hugo holding between his knees his two

sons in the blouse of schoolboys, which appeared in the Salon of the Louvre in 1836 obtained the artist a celebrity which he had long before merited. In the sale of Victor Hugo's house and furniture in 1852, another picture of his, allegorically representing the slumber of the poet, drew considerable attention. His intimacy with the poets, especially with Victor Hugo and Théophile Gautier, insensibly led him to write,—and afterwards to collect his pieces in a volume, thin, but of great merit. Of the piece we give here, his friend Théophile Gautier says—"Son auberge de la Grande Pinte entre autres vaut, par ses tons roux, sa chaude couleur enfumée, un cabaret d' Ostade."

XXV. Romance of Nina. Charles Guillaume Etienne was one of Napoleon's followers. The piece we give here has enjoyed a high reputation,—but a translation cannot do it justice.

XXVI. Dormez—Dormez. The readers of Thackeray's Vanity Fair will remember this piece. Its chief charm is in its music; the words are commonplace.

XXVII. The butterfly. Like Charles Nodier's, Xavier De Maistre's strength lay in his prose; he wrote little in the form of verse. Madame Cottin in her Exiles of Siberia quite spoiled the original and beautiful story of De Maistre. Of the piece given here, we may mention, that it had been translated into Russian, then retranslated into French verse by one of the Secretaries to the Russian Embassy, who did not know its origin. The fall of the leaves by Millevoye had a similar destiny.

XXVIII. On the first page of an album belonging to his friend Auguste Bressier. Emile Deschamps like his brother Antoni Deschamps has paid much attention to foreign literature. His translations from Goëthe and Schiller,—La Cloche, La Fiancée de Corinthe, Le Roi de Thule, may stand side by side with the admirable originals, and his imitations of the Spanish Ballads are as good as those of Mr Lockhart. As an original writer he belongs to the Romantic school founded by Lamartine and Hugo. His complimentary verses in the album of Auguste Bressier, which we give here, are generally considered very happy.

XXIX. Sonnet—The Grave-digger. See note to piece No. VIII.

XXX. Fantasy. Gérard de Nerval had a sad history and a melancholy end. His tastes led him towards the legendary, the mysterious, and the supernatural, and German literature, had, as a consequence, a fascination for him. He translated the Faust of Goëthe and the ballads of Bürger and of Koerner. He knew Hebrew and Sanscrit well, and has left us some translations from Calidasa and Solomon. To the modern school of French poetry he did not take kindly. He called Lamartine a "Lakiste"—of the Lake school of English poetry, and Victor Hugo—"un Espagnol." Still, he was in some respects in advance of the modern school, for he wanted to dispense with rhyme in poetry,—at which the greatest innovators in French versification stood aghast! The mystical sonnets he composed in the last years of his life (obscure to any one who has not the key) are very beautiful. "Their obscurity," says Théophile Gautier, "is illumined by sudden starts, like an idol constellated with carbuncles and rubies in the dark shadow of a crypt."

XXXI. The maiden and the ringdove. In one of her recent volumes Madame Valmore has the following motto on the title page—

"Prisonnière en ce livre une âme est renfermée."

The line contains the secret of her success. Her soul is in her book. She writes from the heart. The music of her verses is very attractive. Charles Baudelaire compares her poems to "un simple jardin anglais romantique et romanesque"—and sets forth his illustration in the following terms—"Des massifs de fleurs y représentent les abondantes expressions du sentiment. Des étangs, limpides et immobiles, qui réfléchissent toutes choses s'appuyant à l'envers sur la voûte renversée des cieux, figurent la profonde résignation toute parsemée de souvenirs. Rien ne manque à ce charmant jardin d'un autre âge: ni quelques ruines gothiques se cachant dans un lieu agreste, ni le mausolée inconnu qui, au détour d'une allée, surprend notre âme et lui commande de penser à l'éternité. Des allées sinueuses et ombragées aboutissent à des horizons subits. Ainsi la pensée du poëte, après avoir suivi de capricieux méandres, débouche

sur les vastes perspectives du passé ou de l'avenir ; mais ces ciels sont trop vastes pour être généralement purs, et la température du climat trop chaude pour n'y pas amasser des orages. Le promeneur en contemplant ces étendues voilées de deuil, sent monter à ses yeux les pleurs de l'hystérie, *hysterical tears*. Les fleurs se penchent vaincues, et les oiseaux ne parlent qu'à voix basse. Après un éclair précurseur, un coup de tonnerre a retenti : c'est l'explosion lyrique : enfin un déluge inévitable de larmes rend à toutes ces choses, prostrées, souffrantes et découragées, la fraicheur et la solidité d'une nouvelle jeunesse."

XXXII. Morning serenade. It would be absurd to make any comment on Victor Hugo in a short note at the end of a book. His name is among the great ones of the earth. With Shakespear, Milton, Byron, Goëthe, Schiller, and the rest, his place has long been marked in the Valhalla of the poets. Sings England's latest poet,—a poet indeed, spite of his many serious aberrations.

" Thou art chief of us, and lord ;
Thy song is as a sword
Keen-edged and scented in the blade from flowers ;
Thou art lord and king ; but we
Lift younger eyes and see
Less of high hope, less light on wandering hours ;
Hours that have borne men down so long,
Seen the right fail, and watched uplift the wrong."

XXXIII. Chanson. See preceding note.

XXXIV. The memories of the people. In spite of Béranger's coarseness, it is impossible to deny him the title of a true poet—a poet of the people. The piece here given, those entitled, Le vieux caporal, Jeanne la Rousse, Le Roi d'Yvetôt, and a hundred others, will always retain their hold on the public mind. See note to piece no XI.

XXXV. The leaf. The oak alluded to in this poem was Napoleon of whom to the last the poet was a faithful adherent. We append a translation of this piece by Lord Macaulay, taken from his Miscellaneous Writings.

"Thou poor leaf, so sear and frail,
Sport of every wanton gale,
Whence and whither dost thou fly,
Through this bleak autumnal sky?
On a noble oak I grew,
Green, and broad, and fair to view;
But the Monarch of the shade
By the tempest low was laid.
From that time I wander o'er
Wood, and valley, hill, and moor,
Wheresoe'er the wind is blowing,
Nothing caring, nothing knowing:
Thither go I, whither goes,
Glory's laurel, Beauty's rose."

XXXVI. Love's catechism. This piece is in Gustave Masson's "La Lyre Française." Author unknown.

XXXVII. On the death of a young girl. Parny was born in the Isle of Bourbon. He lost his fortune during the French Revolution. Napoleon granted him a pension in 1813. His admirers surnamed him the "Tibulle Français." We obtain these facts from M. Gustave Masson's book.

XXXVIII. My Normandy. This song of F. Bérat has long been popular.

XXXIX. Sonnet—Deus ex Machina. See note to piece No. VIII.

XL. Gather the rose-buds while ye may. This piece bears in the original the title of "La Mère Bontemps" and the author is anonymous.

XLI. The grand-mother. This is one of the earlier productions of Victor Hugo. See note to piece No. XXXII.

XLII. My village. The name of the author is Gensoûl. The piece will be found in a little book entitled "Nos Souvenirs."

XLIII. The mother's birthday. The author of this piece is unknown. It will be found in the same book as the preceding.

XLIV. Dost thou remember, Mary. A very popular *Romance*. It will be found in Gustave Masson's collection.

XLV. The captive to the swallows. This is the well-known song of Béranger named "Les hirondelles." For notices of Béranger see notes to pieces Nos. XI. and XXXIV.

XLVI. Epigram,—to a tailor. A free translation. The original epigram is in ten lines.

XLVII. Sonnet,—Believest thou thyself the sole thinker, oh man. For a notice of Gérard de Nerval, the author, see note to piece No. XXX.

XLVIII. Epigram. Included in M. Gustave Masson's collection—"La Lyre Française."

XLIX. Sonnet.—The broken bell. Charles Baudelaire the author of this sonnet is a poet and critic of considerable eminence; but he borrows, without acknowledgment, too much from English and German sources. Look for instance at a little piece of his entitled "Le Guignon" consisting of fourteen lines,—not put in the legitimate form of the sonnet. First you come across the line.

"L'art est long et le temps est court."

Well! say, "Art is long and time is fleeting" is a proverbial expression, and Baudelaire has as much right to use it as Longfellow, but then come the lines

"Mon cœur comme un tambour voilé
Va battant des marches funèbres."

Does not that remind one rather too strongly of Longfellow's

"And our hearts, though true and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating,
Funeral marches to the grave?"

Still it turns to a question of dates. Both of them are living poets. Who wrote his lines first? But there is assuredly no question of dates, or question of any kind whatever, immediately after, when you come across,

"Maint joyau dort enseveli
Dans les ténèbres et l'oubli
Bien loin des pioches et des sondes;
Mainte fleur epanche à regret,
Son parfum doux comme un secret,
Dans les solitudes profondes."

Can anybody render into French verse, more literally, Gray's beautful but hackneyed lines!

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness in the desert air."

L. The farmer's wife. In an eloquent essay on the writings of Hégésippe Moreau author of this piece M. Théodore de Banville broaches the theory that a true poet is ever subject "to the contempt, the hate, the invincible antipathy of the Philistine, who, in the innumerable crowd of versifiers, signals him out with an unerring scent." "Whoever,"—according to M. Banville,—"has not been condemned like Corneille, hissed like Racine, called impious like Molière, immoral like La Fontaine, rude and savage like Shakespear, barbarous like Victor Hugo, a libertine like Alfred de Musset, can never be a true poet." Without attempting seriously to refute a paradox so apparent, and which may nevertheless be supported by many more numerous examples in its favour,—we may simply remark that Hégésippe Moreau has been the butt of as much censure as he has been the subject of praise, and that in his case both the blame and the commendation seem to have been deserved. The fact is, there was a double Moreau, and those who contend for the duality of the human mind could scarcely find a better illustration of their theory, than his life and writings. There was a Moreau, the author of *La Fermière*, of the *Contes*, of the *L'oiseau que j'attends*, of the *Hameau incendié*, of the ode *A mes Chansons*, and of *La Voulzie;* and there was a Moreau, the author of the horrible and blasphemous *Noces de Cana* and of the *Bohème du quartier Latin*. There was a Moreau simple as a child and pure as an angel whose themes were the beauties of his lovely native land, and a Moreau who revelled in the dreadful world of "jupes retroussées," of "vin répandu," of "miroirs cassés" and of "châles aux fenêtres." The difference between the two Moreaus was so great, that the only wonder is, they could have been amalgamated into one person. Can any thing be more lovely than

the description of the Voulzie which the dwarf green Oberon could cross "sans mouiller ses grelots," and which a thirsty giant could drink up at a breath, or than the description of "l' imprimerie proprette" where the poet received a hospitality so noble, or than the description of the farm, for ever blessed, where milk and brown bread and fraternal caresses were lavished on the poor wanderer? And can any thing be more blasphemous, absurd, and horrible, than the "Noces de Cana" to which we have already made reference? Moreau's mind was by its nature pure, and his habitual delight was in rural scenes of peace and plenty, but he joined in the Revolution of 1830, fought in the barricades, got into bad company, and then tried hard to be a writer of political satires for which he never had any turn, and of libertine chansons from which his better nature revolted. Glimpses of that nature flashed out however, even in his utter debasement, for he could sing, addressing his own soul, when he had already been touched by the cold hand of death, in terms such as these:—

"Fuis sans trembler: veuf d'une sainte amie,
Quand du plaisir j'ai senti le besoin,
De mes erreurs, toi, colombe endormie,
Tu n'as été complice ni temoin.
Ne trouvant pas la manne qu'elle implore,
Ma faim mordit la poussière (insensé!);
Mais toi, mon âme, à Dieu, ton fiancé,
Tu peux demain, te dire vierge encore,
Fuis, âme blanche, un corps malade et nu;
Fuis en chantant vers le monde inconnu!"

He died in great poverty, in a public charitable hospital.

LI. The lake. It would be as absurd to give a lengthened notice amongst these Notes of Lamartine as of Victor Hugo. He himself in his own magnificent language has related what every body knows about his infancy and his youth. He was born in the most sombre period of French history, and in a respectable and religious family. The province in which his early days were past, is one of the most beautiful in all France, —"an enchanted land." Of his education, his travels, his

memorable part in the Revolution,—when threatened on all sides by levelled guns and bayonets he preserved his coolness, and made an oration which brought down the "drapeau rouge" already hoisted and prevented a massacre,—his subsequent poverty and distress,—the loss of those he loved,—the death which at last came,—who that is at all familiar with the literature of France—does not know? Read his life by himself and his travels, dear reader, if you have not done so, and thank us for the recommendation. His poetry has been criticised and reviewed times innumerable both in French and English literary periodicals, and there is very little new to be said about it. In fancy, in imagination, in brilliancy, in grandeur, in style,—in all that makes a poet—excepting purity,—he must yield to Victor Hugo. In purity he yields to none. His mind is essentially religious. He never forgot what he learned at a sainted mother's knee,—a mother whom he has a thousand times lovingly commemorated in his writings. There is much in Victor Hugo,—far greater poet though he be,—which it would not be wise to put into the hands of young poeple whose principles have not been sufficiently formed,—but Lamartine may be placed indiscriminately in the hands of all. The "Lectures pour tous"—a selection by himself of his own writings,—has not a line over which the most delicate maiden or most innocent child need blush; and it is delightful reading,—only (for the truth must always be told)—a little dull here and there. Lamartine married an English lady—a grand-daughter of Governor Holwell who was incarcerated in the Black Hole by Surajah Dowlah, in the early days of British rule in India. Of the piece we give here, "The Lake," Alfred de Musset has said;—

"Qui de nous, Lamartine, et de notre jeunesse,
Ne sait par cœur, ce chant, des amants adoré,
Qu' un soir, au bord du *Lac*, tu nous as soupiré?
Qui n'a lu mille fois, qui ne relit sans cesse
Ces vers mystérieux où parle ta maîtresse;
Et qui n'a sangloté sur ces divins sanglots,
Profonds comme le ciel et purs comme les flots?
Hélas! ces longs regrets des amours mensongères,

Ces ruines du temps qu'on trouve à chaque pas,
Ces sillons infinis de lueurs éphémères,
Qui peut se dire un homme et ne les connaît pas?"

LII. Sonnet.—Awake in bed I listened to the rain! M. Sainte-Beuve is one of the greatest literary authorities and critics in France, and his review of a new book has often sealed its fate. The articles he has contributed to the "Constitutionnel," the "Moniteur," and the "Revue des deux mondes" may easily be recognised by their style. His "Causeries de lundi" have a world-wide celebrity. No man can paint a literary portrait so well. We are glad to see that a translation of the reviews of English celebrities in his works is announced. It will give an insight to the English reader of his vast acquaintance with foreign literature, his scholarship, and his discrimination. His prose has to some extent done harm to his poetry. The constant composition of critical or political articles does not seem to be agreeable to the Muse who resents any worship but her own. And of this fact, he himself is aware, for he says, "the poet in me,—shall I confess it? has sometimes suffered from all the indulgences even, accorded to the prose writer." Poet, critic, and romance writer, it is difficult for any man to be all three, with impunity, and to succeed equally well in all. Some poetical lines of his have furnished matter for the daily gaiety of the newspaper press in Provincial France, as well as in the Metropolis. One of these, is—

"Assis sur le penchant des coteaux *modérés*."

Now "coteaux modérés" may be ridiculous enough,—but an unfortunate couplet on which his malignant critics fastened and to which they clung for a long time throws the "coteaux modérés" quite into shade.

"Pour trois ans seulement, oh que je puisse avoir
Sur ma table un lait pur, dans mon lit un œil noir."

We doubt if the oft-quoted

"Let law and learning, trade and commerce die
But give us still our old nobility."

of the English poet and statesman has run the gauntlet of so much sarcastic and contemptuous criticism, as "la table au lait

pur" and "le lit à l'œil noir." Still, it must not be supposed that M. Sainte-Beuve is a bad or even a mediocré poet. Though he does not belong to the first class, and has no title to be ranked with the Hugos and the Lamartines, he takes a high place in the second. His first poetical work was Joseph Delorme. And who and what was Joseph Delorme? "He did not"—says a critic M. Hyppolite Babou (whom we may almost hail as a countryman for is he not a Baboo?) "announce himself as a darling of the Muses, an archangel of genius fallen from heaven, or a poet volcanic burst out from Pandemonium. He was an invalid, and he had died. His interrupted chants were but the vague echoes of a voice beyond the tomb; he had lived in obscurity, in poverty, in doubt, —he had died in isolation and despair. A friend had collected the sad relics of this unfortunate son of René, of this brother or cousin of Werther, Adolphe, Oberman, and he offered them timidly to the faithful, not surrounded by the triumphal laurel, but protected and consecrated by the palm of the martyr. Yes, Joseph Delorme was a martyr of Life and of Poesy! But when people were chanting the De Profundis over the open grave, the coffin was perceived to be empty, the dead had risen and not only risen, but was present at his own funerals, and had even contributed largely to its expenses. A modest and proud talent had played at the moribund to conquer without danger the means to live." Joseph Delorme was no other than Sainte-Beuve himself. His other works are "Consolations," and "Pensées d'août." There is considerable talent in all. The sonnet is a powerful and a delicate instrument in his hands, and he has translated some of Wordsworth's best, worthily. His verses on "rhyme" are very pretty—(yes, pretty is the word) but inferior to those of Amédée Pommier on the same subject. There is considerable similarity in the two pieces though the measure is very different, and the greatest credit must attach to the poet who wrote first, but on this point we have no information. The familiar acquaintance of M. Sainte-Beuve with English literature gives a tone to his poems which would make them more liked and appreciated in England than the works of

much greater poets of France. Another piece of his will be found further on in this volume.

LIII. S'il l'avait su. See note to piece No. XXXI.

LIV. To a young poetess. The verses we cite here from Victor de Laprade are not in his usual vein. They are graceful and musical as become verses addressed to a young lady and a poetess. His ordinary vein is very different, nervous, powerful, lofty and religious—one would say the poems of a spiritual athlete.

In truth Laprade is one of the great poets of France, and may take rank with the greatest names of the time. The first work of Laprade "Les parfums de Madeleine," induced his friend M. Quinet to advise him to relinquish the bar and take up literature as a profession, and to enable him to follow the advice Quinet offered to procure an appointment for him. Then came "Psyche." It "lightened the antique heathen legend with the Christian idea." Psyche is the "pagan Eve." Like Ballanche in his "Orphée," like Quinet in his "Promethée," like Wordsworth in his "Laodamia" he caused a nobler and a higher sentiment—a sentiment unknown to the ancients—to gleam darkly forth from the story for which he was indebted to them. The sentiment was a little vague, but it was there, and though the vulgar accused him of pantheism, the initiated could follow him, especially with the aid of the able preface. After the publication of this work in 1837, Laprade undertook a journey to the Alps. "Here," says his French biographer M. Ch. Alexandre, "Nature made him drunk with her beauties on the high tops of the mountains." He has often made the voyage since with a sack and a stick like a mountaineer. "Forez" continues M. Alexandre, "had made him a poet rustic and domestic, the family,—a poet religious of the past, Provence,—a poet Athenian, but Switzerland made him the poet of Nature." He descended from the Alps quite transfigured

"Ceux qui m'ont vu gravir pesamment la colline
Ne reconnaîtront plus l'homme qui descendra."

He brought back with him a work of great freshness and force, the Odes and Poems which appeared in January 1843. Of this

work M. Alexandre says—"Nature had never been sung about, as it was in this book. Weber, alone, in music has this strange friendship for the elements. It is a sort of poetry at once *vegetale et marmoréenne.* It has the whiteness of the marble and the sap of the oak."

"The poet,"—we continue our quotation from M. Alexandre, merely translating as before his French,—"went to enjoy his success at Paris, and make acquaintance with the great masters of the time. He penetrated to the Abbaye-au-Bois guided by Ballanche, and saw Lamartine, Lammenais and George Sand. He was eager (affamé) to contemplate all the grand poets. In 1835 not being able to see Victor Hugo from the Place Royale, where he had posted himself before the poet's house, he seized a nail and bore it off in triumph as a relic. He has got it still. Vive l'enthousiasme!"—Sir Walter Scott carrying away in triumph the wine-glass out of which his Majesty George the Fourth had drunk, and Laprade carrying away the nail from the bolted door of Victor Hugo might form capital companion pictures.

His subsequent publications are an essay on the sentiment of nature in Homer, "*Poëmes Evangéliques*" in 1852, "Les Symphonies" in 1855, and last of all a satire on the times, in which he abandons his old vein, and handles the weapon of Juvenal. The *Poëmes Evangéliques* and the *Symphonies* were both 'crowned' by the French Academy; and although the former has not been very popular, it is an excellent work. "One would love," says his French critic, "to follow with the poet these holy figures painted with pious art and that recall the frescoes of Flandrin." The *Symphonies* have been liked better by the public. It consists of three poems one of which "Rosa mystica" shines "comme une rosace au soleil couchant," and another "Herman" rings out with the power and sustention "of an Alpine horn." The views which Laprade puts forth in "Herman," are not popular views, such as find favor with readers of newspapers,—for he does not believe in the progress, the moral progress of the world, but they are the decided views of a deliberate, sober and deep thinker to whom the Bible "is

as a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path." In the dedication to his father he says

"Je n'ai vu de progrès que dans l'ignominie,
Et n'attends rien, pour fruit des âges qui naîtront,
Que des hontes de plus à porter sur le front."

Laprade and Lamartine are the only great modern poets of France whose works are essentially and eminently pure and religious, and it is remarkable that they both are deeply indebted for the tone of their minds to their mothers, women of prayer, large minded and self-denying.

LV.—The swallows. Jean Pierre Claris de Florian was born in 1755 at Basses-Cevennes. He suffered great hardships during the first French Revolution. He was thrown into prison, and contracted in captivity the illness of which he shortly after died. His fables are well-known.

LVI.—Chanson de Fortunio. Alfred de Musset is a name too well known to require detailed notice in this place. He is one of the most popular poets of France, and his countrymen regard him as their Byron. In truth he possesses the spirit, the power, the wit, the brilliance, and the love of nature sometimes real and sometimes affected, which mark the writings of the English poet. Like Byron, he has no great depth of thought. Like Byron, he is sometimes eccentric and wild. His landscapes, like Byron's, seem to have been elaborated more often in a study, under the fumes of wine, than in the open air and under the blue sky. But his passion, like Byron's, has often the true ring. His epigrams, like Byron's, sparkle. And his pathos, like Byron's also, is sometimes profound.

In early life he considered himself above the power of Love and wrote the well-known lines.

"Si jamais par les yeux d'une femme sans cœur
Tu peux m'entrer au ventre et m'empoisonner l'âme,
Ainsi que d'une plaie on arrache une lame,
Plutôt que comme un lâche on me voie en souffrir,
Je t'en arracherai quand j'en devrais mourir."

But his boasting was premature; he was attained by the arrow of the god at last, and thenceforth his life became a

dreary desert, without joy and without hope. It is not known whom he loved or why his love was unsuccessful. His proud heart ever guarded the mystery of his torment. "Not one confidence, not one indiscretion, not even an involuntary confession, or a portrait of the lady, is to be found in the whole of his works," and yet there can be no question that he suffered greatly, for after this time, for many long, long years, he lived like a blasted tree, forgotten by a generation that had before adored him.

The verses we give here have much of the manner of Byron, and a touch of sincerity which has made them a general favorite.

LVII.—Omnia Vincit Amor. The Marquis de Belloy was born in Waterloo year. Possessed of great wealth, like his friend and countryman, the Count F. de Gramont, and like Lord Byron and Rogers in England, he might have well kept himself aloof from the struggles of the literary arena, and simply patronised men of letters and received their homage, but he preferred to enter the lists himself and he has done his devoir like a gallant knight and true gentleman.

An idea may be formed of his extensive patronage of poor and unknown but meritorious authors by the number of books good, bad, and indifferent, dedicated to him. M. De Balzac inscribed his name at the beginning of the best of his *contes philosophiques*, and thought himself honoured to be permitted thus to hang up his *ex-voto* to one, who was at once a munificent patron of literature and a poet and scholar of consummate ability.

The Marquis de Belloy's works are Karl Dujardin a play in one act of which Théophile Gautier said, it was worth "the trouble of a journey by post through the snow and sleet from any part of France to the Odeon," Pythias et Damon ou l'Oreille de Denys a drama of great merit, a volume of fugitive poems mingled with the biography of an imaginary personage le chevalier d'Aï, and then his principal work the Legendes fleuries, consisting of five poems of which Orpha (the Orpha of the book of Ruth) is the best.

M. de Belloy has also translated into verse some of the comedies of Terence, and published a satirical poem.

LVIII.—To my children. Jules Lefèvre-Deumier is one of the most fertile and the most persevering of the French poets of the nineteenth century. He was the brother-at-arms and friend of the valiant phalanx consisting of De Vigny, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, and several others, who after many heroic battles established the new school of poetry, which is now admitted to be the best, in France. He has written much, and written admirably well, but his name has never come out of the shadow which seems to be the unfortunate lot of so many poets worthy of distinction.

In his earlier poems he drew much of his inspiration from England. *Le Parricide* and *Parisina* are in the vein of Byron. *Le Retour* is an imitation of Sir Walter Scott. And even when his genius was matured by travel and experience, after a long residence in Italy, when he published the *Clocher de Saint Marc*, it had still the Byronic ring, and reminded one of Childe Harold.

Not till Lefèvre-Deumier published *Les Confidences* in 1833 did he shake off his English yoke and assert his own perfect originality. Twelve years after, or thereabouts, came two big volumes, Œuvres d'un desœuvré, a collection of prose and verse. On these Confidences and Œuvres, will no doubt rest his fame with future generations. *Les Confidences* is the history of a passion as ardent as unfortunate, and the perpetual elevation of tone, and the sustained nobility of the sentiments, impart a penetrating accent to the grief and the despair of the lover. *Œuvres d'un desœuvré*—presents us pieces of the most diverse kinds heaped pell-mell in the most rich and gorgeous confusion "Reveries, meditations, satires, all figure there without any other order, but the date of birth or transcription." The volumes abound with classical, scientific and philosophic erudition rare to see united to such high poetic gifts.

The piece we produce here,—"*À mes enfants*,"—which terminates the last volume (The Curfew) published by Lefévre-Deumier, is a "vrai testament" of the poet. With the simplicity

of the *School Mistress* of Shenstone it unites a pathos profoundly moving. "Posterity," says his French critic, "will hear the prayer which he has only addressed to his family. It will take care of this noble name,—it will protect it from an ungrateful oblivion. It will make in his numerous works a selection, severe perhaps, but salutary on the whole, and at this price it will certainly perpetuate the renown of one of the highest poetic intelligences of our times."

LIX. Loneliness. See note to piece No. LI by the same author.

LX. Nice. Madame Ackermann is the widow of a great "savant" formerly tutor to the nephews of the King of Prussia. She is a scholar of the first order herself, and is acquainted not only with all the modern languages but with Latin and Greek, Hebrew and Sanscrit, and even (so it is reported) Chinese. No English authoress, not even Mrs. Browning, is her equal in point of erudition. On the death of her beloved husband, whom she assisted greatly in his literary undertakings, she retired to Nice, where she leads a life of great seclusion. The scenes of her principal stories are laid in India, and she says in one of her poems,

> "L'Inde me plaît, non pas que j'aie encore
> De mes yeux vu ce rivage enchanteur ;
> Mais on sait lire, et même, sauf erreur,
> On a du lieu déchiffré maint auteur."

> "Ind pleases me, not that I've seen as yet
> With my own eyes, its shores renowned in story,
> But I can read, appreciate, and have met
> Its bards in spirit, with their brows of glory."

LXI. Sonnet.—Michael Angelo. During the Revolution of 1830 appeared the Curée; and the effect was overwhelming. Auguste Barbier was then in his twenty-fifth year and this was his first work. It placed him at once on the pinnacle of popularity. The poem is indeed written with great power, greater power by far than that displayed in the Marseillaise, which owes its popularity more to its glorious music than its

words. But there was a coarseness mingled with the power in the *Curée* which is damaging at the present day. Barbier wrote several poems afterwards, and although some of them have great merit, none had the popularity of his first-born. In fact his reputation declined with his years. This was hardly just to him,—but it was the natural consequence of a too sudden elevation.

LXII. The roses of Saadi. See note to piece No. XXXI.

LXIII. Soleil couchant. See note to piece No. XXXII. It is impossible to do justice in translations to Victor Hugo's beautiful pieces, but it is next to impossible to abstain from an attempt every now and then.

LXIV. The cow. See note to piece No. XXXII.

LXV. Sonnet.—Rimembranza. See note to piece No. VIII.

LXVI. Oh desert of the heart. See note to piece No. LII.

LXVII. Sextine. We have already given a sonnet by le Comte F. de Gramont (see piece II and note). The Sextine is something new in English versification. The thought in the piece translated, seems rather obscure,—remains, as it were, in a half-shadow,—and we have not attempted to drag it into clearer light than that in which it was placed by the author.—The poems of le Comte de Gramont have a masculine vigour, a loftiness of rhythm and tone, and an austere beauty, which place them in the highest rank amongst modern French poems. Some of his sonnets have almost the trumpet note of Milton.

LXVIII. The solitary nest. See note to piece No XXXI. Madame Desbordes-Valmore's Solitary nest, (like most of her pieces of the same *genre*) has a music which a translation can never adequately render.

LXIX. Fallen women, See note to piece No. XXXII.

LXX. Lights. Louis Bouilhet is a great poet of the order of Victor de Laprade, only not so religious. His two principal works are *Melœnis* and *Les fossiles*. Melœnis is a Roman story, which in a small frame gives ample scope to the author for the display of his high classical knowledge, as well as his intimacy with the human heart, and the springs of human action. The scene is in Rome, the time the reign

of Commodius, "when Roman society had become rotten to the core." A tone of light irony pervades the book and pleasantly replaces the ordinary indignation of satires. The *Fossiles* is a work on the creation. Science enters largely into it, but without spoiling it. The combats of the antediluvian animals classed in the two families of the plesiosaures and the pterodactyles are described with a scientific precision and a poetical vigour which is simply wonderful. M. Bouilhet has also written two dramas, *Madame de Montarcy*, a historical picture, and *Hélène Peyron* a picture of contemporary Parisian life. Both the dramas are strong in situations and characters, and are written with great care in his masterly style, but they never attained popularity. Between the intervals of these dramas M. Bouilhet published another volume of lyrical poetry under the simple title of *Poesies*. This volume contains a great diversity of subjects and is rich in descriptions of nature.

The piece we cite here is taken from the *Poesies*. The last stanza is not in the original, but has been added by the translator, to suit the taste of the English reader, to whom, a satire however keen may be the irony, on an age long gone by, without a modern application or a latent significance, would appear unmeaning and unnecessary.

LXXI. A page from the Bible. Arsène Houssaye cannot be called a great poet, but his descriptions of rural scenery have a freshness that is charming. He has written some pieces about Greece which are admired, but his strength lies in pastoral France. We have given one of his pieces already, see No. XI Béranger to the Academy.

LXXII. The child on the sea-shore. Auguste Vacquerie is a very pure poet, pure both in his life and his works. Like Wordsworth he thinks that a poet's life must conform to his works, otherwise those works can never be sincere; and he is right. M. Vacquerie is a devoted admirer of Shakespeare, and a great friend of Victor Hugo who calls him in *Les Châtiments* "the brother of his sons." He has written an excellent comedy *Tragaldabas*. He has also translated some plays of Shakespeare in conjunction with a friend M. Paul Meurice. It is no

disparagement to him to say, that these translations of Shakespeare are far inferior to those of an honored friend of the present writer, Le Chevalier de Chatelain of Castelnau Lodge, the school-fellow and friend of Victor Hugo, for that is tantamount only to saying they are inferior to the best translations of Shakespeare in the French language,—but they are still, by no means common or contemptible translations. M. Vacquerie's principal poetical works are "*l'Enfer de l'Esprit*" and "*Demi-Teintes.*" In criticism, he has written a volume sparkling with spirit, gaiety and good sense, called *Profils et Grimaces.* His contributions to reviews and journals have been very numerous.

LXXIII. Sonnet.—A vision. For a notice of the Marquis de Belloy see note to piece No. LVII.

LXXIV. Cheval et cavalier. Gustave Nadaud, born at Roubaix in 1821, is a "chansonnier." He composes his own music, and sings his own songs, which have great merit, and delight the poor in their gatherings on the fields, as well as the rich in their decorated salons. Light, pleasant, often witty, never tiresome, sometimes with a dash of pathos, what more need one require of songs? M. Charles Alexandre commenting upon them says, "l' esprit est le fond, le sol de cette muse positive, le sentiment flotte sur elle comme la vapeur bleue sur les montagnes." If there is no depth of thought, no passion, no sublimity, —ah! it is because the "chansonnier" has his "rôle fatal." He must please. This poesy which lives only in the present, cannot wait for the future. The *chanson* aspires only to a fugitive success, the light popularity of the salons and the streets. And the Public is like the Sultan of the Arabian Nights. It must be amused,—amused under any circumstances,—amused under pain of death, and it would never pardon the "chansonnier" if he were to tire it by poesy pure, or poesy of a high order, or poesy with a moral.

LXXV. Les saintes amitiés. Ulric Guttinguer born in 1785 was one of the pioneers of the modern school of French poetry, of which Victor Hugo afterwards became the avowed and worthy leader. He tried timidly at first, and more boldly

afterwards, though never very boldly, to break through the vapid commonplaces which passed for poetry in the eighteenth century. A French critic compares his part to that of Moses, who led the people of Israel to the promised land, and had a sight of it, but could not enter in it. His prose has been considered superior to his poetry. A novel named *Arthur*, illustrative in part of his own life, throws much light on his poetry, and is, from all accounts, written with considerable power. M. Sainte-Beuve has said that "Arthur vivra, et fera vivre le nom de son auteur."

LXXVI. In praise of women. Auguste Brizeux came of an Irish family settled in France after the Revolution of 1688. He was born in 1803. Passionately fond of Brittany the province, and Lorient the town in which he was born, after long and repeated residence in Italy, he used to hail his native place, as the best in every respect on earth; and in one of his poems he says of the town

> "Dans notre Lorient tout est clair dès qu 'on entre;
> De la Porte de Ville on va droit jusqu 'au centre :
> Ainsi marchent ses fils au sentier du devoir."

It is remarkable that Brizeux never condescended to write in prose. Whether he felt that he was born to be a poet, and would degrade himself by being any thing else, or whether he had any diffidence in the matter, it is certain, that while every other poet wrote romances, essays, histories, criticism, he rigidly held to his lyre, and excepting one poor attempt in early life, would not even try the field of the drama. His two best poems are *Marie* and the *Fleur d'or*. There is a pastoral beauty, a chastity, a delicacy, in these flowers of his creation, which can scarcely be too highly praised. It has been a moot question, whether Brizeux personally knew and loved this Marie with the naked feet

> "Cette grappe du Scorf, cette fleur du blé noir."

A school-fellow of his says, she never existed, except in his imagination. A brother, on the other hand, avers, that she lived, that he had known her, and that he was a witness of the

principal scenes related in the poem. Did Brizeux see her after she had been married, and was the mother of a family? There is a light, a halo about this Marie, like that which circles around the Jeanie Morrison of Motherwell, and one feels a wish to know more about her. The rest of Brizeux's poems fall far short of these master-pieces. They want the Virgilian charm, the Theocritan "souffle." He died at Montpellier far from his native soil in 1858.

LXXVII.—The rose and the tomb. See note to piece No. XXXII.

LXXVIII. Sonnet.—Oarystis. See note to piece No. VIII.

LXXIX. A flame. Charles Coran born in 1814, a friend of Auguste Brizeux, noticed in note No. LXXVI, is the author of two volumes of poems named respectively *Onyx*—1841, and *Rimes Galantes*—1847. He has not written any thing during the last fifteen years, and leads the quiet and delicious life of a dilettante. The last of his two published poems is superior to the first, in which he had been, to some extent, groping about to find out his vocation. He cannot by any means be called a poet of a high order. Love verses, unless very superior, appear ridiculous now-a-days. One can read a chanson by Victor Hugo or Tennyson, but a mediocre love-lyric! Still Coran has one great merit. He is thoroughly French. It is on this account rather difficult to translate his poems. They lose their principal charm in the process. The "duvet" on the peach does not bear to be handled. There is a very pretty Rondeau of his commencing with the words "Bergère rose," which seems to toss up its head with a disdainful air, like a pretty miss, every time we attempt to render it in English.

LXXX. The foundling. Alexandre Soumet lived between the Classical and Romantic schools of French Poetry. He had been brought up in the old school, and could not therefore join the new, except in a timid and hesitating way, although he felt the superiority of it. His first success was in the dramatic line, "Clytemnestre" and "Saül," tragedies which opened to him the doors of the French Academy. He next tried his hand at Epic poems, *Jeanne d'Arc*, pronounced by a very competent

French critic to be a complete miscarriage, of which "the plan is defective, the color false, and the tone declamatory"—and *La Divine Epopée*, on the subject of the Redemption, a subject which as already handled by Milton in the Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained, would have been avoided as likely to provoke damaging comparisons by a wiser writer. Soumet is said to have always kept the plume of an eagle on his desk, not to write with, but "to have always present to his thoughts that a poet such as he aspired to be, must build his eyrie on the highest summits,—must wheel in the regions of the sky." "This cursed plume of the eagle,"—says M. Léon de Wailly—"was his ruin." Had he not attempted so much, he would have left a more durable reputation. He had sufficient means to defray a moderate ambition, but he wasted his patrimony in mad enterprises, like many another conceited literary spendthrift. As it is, writers with less merit and less ambition, placed in circumstances more propitious, have, simply by attempting what was in their power to accomplish, acquired titles more real and more durable than Soumet, to the esteem of posterity.

La nuit de Noël, and the piece we give here, *La pauvre fille*, have been much admired, and have been quoted in almost every book of Selections, but the feeling in them, does not seem to be very genuine, and much of their success must have arisen from the very nature of the themes.

LXXXI. A la Grâce de Dieu. Gustave Lemoine the author of this piece must not be confounded with André Lemoyne, the author of "The lost path" (Piece XIX). There is a homely but sincere pathos in this short poem, very inadequately rendered, which reminds one of Wapping Old Stairs, Blackeyed Susan, and pieces of the same stamp in English literature. Another piece of Gustave Lemoine is No. III in this book.

LXXXII. Chanson. Like pieces Nos. VI. and VII. this poem is an extract from Victor Hugo's masterly work *Les Châtiments*. When the Emperor was a prisoner in Germany, and the Empress had fled to England, the appearance of Victor Hugo at the French legislative assembly, gathered to resolve

"that the throne had been abdicated and to form a new Government," was hailed with one long cry of "Les Châtiments, Les Châtiments."

LXXXIII. Roland. There are some poets whose fame rests on a single, and not unfrequently, a very small poem,—a sonnet or a few couplets. In France, the fame of Félix Arvers rests on the well-known sonnet.

"Mon âme a son secret, ma vie a son mystère,"

which is given here as piece No. V. In England, the fame of Sir Egerton Brydges who has written volumes on volumes of both prose and verse rests on a single beautiful sonnet—Echo and Silence, commencing with the line,

"In eddying course when leaves began to fly,"—

Blanco White's fame rests on a single sonnet considered by Coleridge the best in the language,

"Mysterious night when our first parents came,"—

The Rev. C. Wolf's fame rests on the lines called the Burial of Sir John Moore—magnificient lines which every schoolboy knows by heart,—though they embody only the simple details given in Colonel Napier's history,

"Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note."—

Similarly the fame of M. Napoléon Peyrat rests on this one poem of one hundred and twenty lines. It is difficult to convey in a translation an idea of the rapid movement, "rapid as the course of the traveller addressed, or the gallop of the horses of Musa el Kevir," and the vivid colouring of the original piece. We have done our best, but our best is bad. Any traveller who has followed the same itinerary as the poet will at once recognise that the country described has not been dreamed of and created out of the depths of his own powerful imagination by some grand magician of a poet, but is a country seen, taken in, and admirably rendered by a few strokes of the brush of a master painter. "*La vermeille* Orléans, Limoges *aux trois sveltes clochers*, l'Aveyron *murmurant* entre des *pelouses pleines de parfums*, les *grèves pensives* du Tescoud, le Tarn *fauve*, la Garonne aux *longs flots*, aux eaux *convulsives* où nagent des *navires bruns* et des *îlots verdoyants*, Toulouse, jetée comme une

perle au milieu des *fleurs*, les *blancs chevaux* à la *crinière argentée*, dont le pied grêle a des poils noirs *comme des plumes d'aigle*, Fénélon le *cygne aux chants divins*,

Qui nageait aux sources d'Homère !

et à la dernière strophe, les armées passant par Roncevaux :—*soldats, canons, tambours, chevaux, chants tonnant dans l'espace* &c." "Voilá bien"—saÿs a French critic, M. Charles Asselineau,—"l'art de 1833 ; l'art d'enchâsser savamment l'image dans le vers et de tout combiner pour l'effet, et le son, et la figure, et le rhythme, et la coupe, et la place et l'enjambement."

The author wrote under the *nom de plume* of Napol le Pyrénéen, and his real name was long unknown. At last M. Paul Boiteau, published it with some details of the life of the poet. He is a protestant pastor and was the friend of Béranger and Lammenais. He lives still and has a charge in a village "avoisinant Saint-Germain." He wrote other poems in his youth when he chanted nature, and the heroes of his mountains. What has become of these chants? Nobody can say. The author has chosen, it is said, the life of shadow and humility,—he is devoted to an earnest and a great work, and thinks very little of these pastimes of his earlier days.

LXXXIV. The awakening. See note to piece No. LXXXII.

LXXXV. To those who sleep. See note to piece No. LXXXII.

LXXXVI. The Voulzie. See note to piece No. L.

LXXXVII. The political prisoner. See note to piece No. LXXXII.

LXXXVIII. Moses. Alexander Smith the author of Dreamthorp, himself a poet of no mean order, and who has written a neglected novel named Alfred Haggart's Household, which is as sweet as any thing that has appeared since the Vicar of Wakefield, says of England's Poet Laureate "Mr. Tennyson does not imitate so much as he is imitated, but even in his ear there have lingered notes from the other side of the Atlantic." Then quoting the last stanza of the famous garden song in Maud,

She is coming, my own, my sweet :
Were it ever so airy a tread,

My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthen bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead,—
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

he observes, "in these lines a quick ear detects Poe's music ringing like a silver bell."

With much greater reason than Alexander Smith we might ask if the lines most often quoted from the Poet-Laureate's Tithonus,—and the whole piece itself in all its beauty,—is not an echo of Alfred de Vigny's Moïse? Let the reader judge. Sings the Poet-Laureate,

"Me only cruel immortality
Consumes: I wither slowly in thine arms
Here at the quiet limit of the world,"

and again,

"————————When the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
Of happy men that have the power to die
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me and restore me to the ground."

Now hear the poet of France,

"Mon Dieu! Vous m'avez fait puissant et solitaire,
Laissez-moi m'endormir du sommeil de la terre."

and again,

"Vos anges sont jaloux et m'admirent entre eux.....
Et cependant, Seigneur, je ne suis pas heureux."
.....
"J'ai marché devant vous, triste et seul dans ma gloire."
.....
"L'orage est dans ma voix, l'eclair est sur ma bouche;
Aussi, loin de m'aimer, voilà qu'ils tremblent tous,
Et quand j'ouvre les bras, on tombe à mes genoux."

Alfred de Vigny's *Moïse* is indeed a poem of great beauty, and may stand side by side with *Tithonus*. "It is not the true

Moïse,—historically perhaps,"—says his French critic M. D'Aurevilly,—" the Moïse Hebraic and Biblical, but what a beautiful human Moïse it is. What a weariness in the man who has penetrated into every thing! What a prodigious fatigue of his superiority! What a disgust of life, in an eternal celibacy of power! What a weight at the heart! What sorrow for his high function, ever near God, where the air is not respirable for a human creature in the flesh! What an overwhelming sublimity—throughout!"

Of the other pieces of M. Alfred de Vigny the beautiful poem of Eloa is the best. Eloa is the angel of pity in heaven. She was born from the tear of our Lord at the grave of Lazarus. She compassionates the prince of the fallen angels when she first hears of him as

——————"Qu 'à présent il est sans diadème,
Qu'il gémit, qu'il est seul, que personne ne l' aime!"

Then she falls in love with him and perishes.

Next to Eloa is le Cor,—

"Oh que le son du cor est triste au fond des bois!"

Dolorida which is much admired in France, is of the Byronic school, far inferior to both the last mentioned pieces,—melodramatic—nay verging on the absurd. The Death of the wolf which we give further on, is wanting in condensation, and teaches a very questionable philosophy.

M. de Vigny is also an excellent novelist, but his *Cinq-Mars* which is generally considered his best work, and finds a place in every library, seems to us to be cold and dull compared with his *Servitude et Grandeur militaires.*

LXXXIX. Pantoum. This is a miserable little piece to cite from so great a poet as Théophile Gautier. We shall give a longer notice of him should we have occasion to give the translatoin of a poem more worthy of his genius and high fame.

XC. The universal republic. See note to piece No. LXXXII &c.

XCI. The dawn. See note to piece No. LXXXII.

XCII. Sonnet. See note to piece No. XXVIII.

XCIII. The ocean.—An address to the people. See note to piece No. LXXXII, and other notes on Victor Hugo.

XCIV. The rest of evening. See note to piece No. XX.

XCV. Sonnet. Antoni Deschamps, the brother of Emile Deschamps has not much resemblance to him as a poet Antoni, is stiff, cold, uniform, austere, sometimes sublime, whereas Emile is varied, supple, changing and graceful. Antoni has written little or no prose, Emile has written a great deal of prose as well as verse. Antoni has devoted himself to the poetry of Italy, Emile has fluttered about from the poetry of Germany to the poetry of England, of Italy and of Spain. Antoni's translation of Dante, in which he has wished to give, according to his own expressions "an idea of the tone and manner of Dante," is a noble work,—a model for all who undertake the work of translation. He abstains from all notes and commentaries and endeavours to produce with a religious fidelity "the color and especially the accent" of the poetry of the great master,— and his success is wonderful. His other works are, "Etudes sur l'Italie," in which the influence of his attentive study of Dante is always apparent, and "Elégies" in which his own private life and its sorrows are laid bare with a power that fascinates, and "Resignation" (his last work, we believe) a sort of sequel to the "Elégies," not unworthy of the fame he had previously won.

Antoni never married,—never even fell in love ; all his love was for his books ; hence a lonely life, a life so forlorn that he seems weary of it. The following verses may give some idea of his feelings. The original has considerable pathos.

The world for me was as if it were not,
The real, the common, never I sought,
The fanciful for me was all in all,
The rest for the poor and vulgar who crawl ;
And now remark, while still, still in my prime,
All pleasure to me, seems almost a crime,
Distasteful and weary. Of other clay
I thought I was made, exempt from decay,
Formed, vivified, as few spirits have been

With an essence more powerful, subtle and keen
Than the herd. O folly ! O sin ! O pride !
Pity me all those that will not deride !
Behold like a brute I eat and I range,
And the brute itself with me would not change,
For it has nurslings to feed in its den,
And I've none at my hearth, the most lonely of men.

XCVI. Napoléon le petit. See note to piece No. LXXXII.&c.

XCVII. Flytfaglarne. *Flytfaglarne* means birds of passage in the Swedish language. The poem in fact is Swedish ; and its author is the poet Stagnelius. M. X. Marmier has translated it into French prose in his beautiful novel "*Les all Fiancés du Spitzberg*," which we most heartily recommend to readers. The book has been "couronné par l'Academie Française" and is a masterpiece. The only poem of Hayley, Cowper's friend, which still lives, and deserves to live, is very much in the vein of this piece. Perhaps the reader may remember some of Hayley's lines, the echo of which still rings in our ears.

"Ye gentle birds that perch aloof
And smooth your pinions on my roof,
Preparing for departure hence
Ere winter's angry threats commence ;
Like you my soul would smooth her plume
For longer flights beyond the tomb."

XCVIII. The Plesiosaurus. The Plesiosaurus is an antediluvian animal. A notice of L. Bouilhet will be found in note to piece No. LXX. Although a Frenchman would faint away at the idea of *blank* verse, which is not allowed in French poetry, we have not hesitated to render this piece in that form as well as the one that follows, and some others that come after.

XCIX. Maxima debetur pueris reverentia. Amédée Pommier is not a great poet, but his verses are always very musical. A piece entitled *La Rime* is delightful.

C. Marie. For a notice of A. Brizeux see note to piece No. LXXVI.

CI. Advice and reply. See note to piece No. LXXXII and other notes on Victor Hugo.

CII. The wine of Jurançon. For a notice of Charles Coran see note to piece No. LXXIX. We do not know if there is an equivalent for *piquette* in English,—it means,—the bad wine pressed out of grapes after they have been squeezed, and water poured upon them.

CIII. The Ocean's song. See note to piece No. LXXXII. and other notes on Victor Hugo.

CIV. The butterfly. See note to piece No. LI.

CV. Qu'aimez-vous? Charles Dovalle was born at Montreuil-Bellay a small town in the department of Maine-et-Loire on the 23rd June 1807, and his infancy and boyhood were passed joyously in the liberty of a country life, amidst picturesque rural scenes full of old recollections and ruined castles that spoke of feudal grandeur. He came to Paris to seek his fortune in his twentieth year, " with a portfolio and his brain full of rhymes." In the course of two years, during which he wrote a good deal in the papers—he died,—the victim of a duel. With a great deal of immaturity,—there is much promise in his poems. M. Charles Asselineau says, his works "are a pale dawn—like all dawns,—but with the certain and assured signs of a glorious and bright noon." The greatest poet of France in our days,—perhaps the greatest poet in the world now living, has honored Dovalle's memory with a notice, written soon after the pistol bullet had traversed the portfolio which he always carried about with him,—and reached his heart. Says Victor Hugo—"A poesy quite young, childish at times; now the desires of a cherubim; now a sort of creole carelessness; a verse with a gracious carriage; not very metrical, or rhythmic according to rule; but always full of a harmony more natural than musical; joy, voluptuousness, love,—woman especially,—woman turned into a divinity; woman worshipped as a Muse; —and every-where flowers, fêtes, spring, morning, youth—behold, what was found in the portfolio of elegies, torn up by a pistol ball." These words would be poor Dovalle's passport to the temple of Fame, if he needed any passport besides his remains.

CVI. My Utopia. See note to piece No. XCIX.

CVII. Stances. See note to piece No. XXVIII.

CVIII. The resting-place of the king. This piece will be found in the *Revue des deux mondes* for 1864 Vol. XLIX Page 959. For a notice of Auguste Barbier see note to piece No. LXI.

CIX. Patria. See note to piece No. LXXXII. and other notes on Victor Hugo. The song is married in the original to Beethoven's glorious music. Vide Appendix.

CX. A souvenir of the night of the 4th. Like Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, *Les Châtiments* of Victor Hugo harps upon one subject. A great sorrow inspired the muse of the one, a great public wrong that of the other. But in Tennyson's poem, exquisite as it is, the monotony palls at last, while in Hugo's the variety is infinite; hence the superiority of the latter. Disdainful, sarcastic, pathetic, sublime, by turns, the book is a master-piece of its kind. The piece translated here is about the child killed in the Carrefour Tiquetonne on the 4th December 1851, during the street-fights consequent on the *coup d'état* of Napoleon III. Victor Hugo alludes to it in another piece in the Châtiments,

"Victoire! ils ont tué, carrefour Tiquetonne,
Un enfant de sept ans!"

CXI. Hope. For a notice of M. Sainte-Beuve see note to piece No. LII.

CXII. France, à l'heure où tu te prosternes. See previous notices of Victor Hugo in notes to pieces Nos. CX, LXXXII VI. &c.

CXIII. The fall of the leaves. Sainte-Beuve has remarked that there exists or has existed in every man be he a poet or not, "a certain flower of sentiment, of vague desire, and of reverie," which expires and vanishes under "prosaic labours" and the every-day occupations of life. There exists, he thinks, in all men, or in the vast majority of men, "a poet who dies young while the man himself lives on." Millevoye the author of this piece is in Sainte-Beuve's opinion "the personified type of the young poet who cannot live but must die in each of us at the age of thirty years more or less." The criticism is just. Millevoye is a poet of a secondary order. He lived

when a great change was coming over French poetry, and he had not courage or genius to leave the old beaten tracks. "Charles Millevoye," said his friend Nodier, "would have made new and successful invasions in the domains of Poesy if he had not made *de si bonnes études.*" But these *bonnes études* were not the only obstacles, it seems, in his way. He wanted vigor, imagination, originality. He could write sweetly in the old style and that was all. The little poem we give here has been called, oddly enough, *la Marseillaise des mélancoliques.* It has been translated into several languages, and was once retranslated into French from the Russian, by a Frenchman who did not know its origin.

CXIV. The clarions of thought. See notes to pieces Nos. CX, LXXXII, VI, &c.

CXV. La chanson des adieux. M. André Theuriet has been a valued contributor to the *Revue des deux mondes* since 1857, and he contributes to that periodical largely still, both in verse and prose. His poetical pieces, which show a great love for the beauties of nature and a very high talent for description, have also much tenderness and feeling. These pieces were collected together in a volume entitled *Le chemin des bois* in 1867, and received, and deservedly, the approbation of the French Academy. M. Theuriet is the author also of a drama in verse *Jean-Marie* which was acted at the Odéon in 1871, and of several novels such as *Nouvelles intimes, Mademoiselle Guignon, Une Ondine,* &c., of considerable power, but like most French novels, of doubtful taste if not of doubtful morality.

CXVI. Souvenir d'un vieil air. M. Valery Vérnier is a constant contributor, like the subject of the preceding note, to the *Revue des deux mondes.*

CXVII. October. M. Emile Augier was born at Valence, and became known to the world of letters by a drama of two acts in verse, entitled *La Ciguë* which was acted with the most brilliant success at the Odéon in 1844. His other dramas in verse are, *Un homme de bien* a comedy in three acts, *L' Aventurière* a comedy in five acts, *Gabrielle* a comedy in five acts, *Le*

joueur de flûte a comedy in one act, *Diane* a play in five acts, and some others, besides several dramas in prose. His collection of fugitive pieces entitled simply *Poésies* was published in 1856. He is connected as a contributor with the *Revue des deux mondes*, and was made a member of the French Academy in 1858.

CXVIII. Watteau. See the preceding note in respect to M. Emile Augier the author of this piece. Watteau's pictures are too well known to need any remark in this place.

CXIX. Chinoiserie. These small poems scarcely convey, as we have already remarked in the note to piece No. LXXXIX, an adequate idea of the poetical genius of M. Théophile Gautier which is of a very high order. For correctness and chastity of style he has few equals. Never infringing the rules of French versification, as greater poets than himself, notably Victor Hugo, have sometimes done, he has yet been able to add to the power of the language by his majestic and harmonious combinations. His word painting is exceedingly vivid, and at the same time exceedingly natural; and the only discord that jars in his magnificent utterances is that taint of—shall we call it irreverence or infidelity—which is unfortunately too common even amongst the best French modern poets. The lines addressed to Gautier by his friend Théodore Banville do not give him more than his due meed of praise.

" Pas de travail commode!
Tu prétends, comme moi,
Que l'Ode
Garde sa vieille loi,

Et que, brillant et ferme,
Le beau Rhythme d'airain
Enferme
L'idée au front serein.
* * * * *
Et toi, qui nous enseigne
L'amour du vert laurier,
Tu daignes
Être un bon ouvrier."

CXX.—Orso. A pastoral. See note to piece No. CXVII for a notice of the author, Émile Augier.

CXXI. The retreat from Moscow. Victor Hugo has been noticed in notes to pieces Nos. CX, LXXXII, VI, &c. But for a vivid historical account of the retreat see Hazlitt.

CXXII. The forts of Paris. The last poetical work of Victor Hugo *L'Année terrible*, from which this piece is taken, shows no diminution of his wonderful powers.

CXXIII. To my grand-children. This piece is taken from the work mentioned in the preceding note.

CXXIV. Sonnet.—The foot-print on the sand. See note to piece No. VIII.

CXXV. The death of the wolf. This piece has not the ordinary condensation of Alfred de Vigny—who is great both as a poet and as a novelist. See note to piece No. LXXXVIII.

CXXVI. The message. The reader will perhaps feel a little surprised to find a poem by Henri Heine in a collection gleaned in "French fields." But Henri Heine was neither a German nor a Frenchman. He was a Jew who embraced Christianity, and afterwards turned infidel, or at all events preserved only a very modified sort of belief. Born in Germany he lived in France, or rather in the French capital. Though he wrote in German and had a power over that language which few have shown since Goëthe and Schiller, h predilections and tastes were all French. This piece and several others were translated by himself into French and published in the *Revue des deux mondes* under fictitious signatures. His command over the French language was great for a foreigner, though not so marvellous as his command over the German.

CXXVII. Sonnet. Down there. See note to piece No. VIII. We may simply add here that M. Joséphin Soulary holds some humble office in one of the public departments of France.

CXXVIII. Sonnet. The divine antithesis. See notes to pieces Nos. VIII and CXXVII.

CXXIX. Ni haine ni amour. See note to piece No. CXXVI, and compare this poem with piece No. V by Félix Arvers.

" Pour elle, quoique Dieu l'ait faite douce et tendre,
Elle suit son chemin, distraite et sans entendre
Ce murmure d'amour élevé sur ses pas,
A l'austère devoir pieusement fidèle
Elle dira, lisant ces vers tout remplis d'elle :
" Quelle est donc cette femme ?" et ne comprendra pas"

CXXX. On the barricade. This is a poem from the veteran poet's recent work *L'Année terrible*. See notes to pieces Nos. CX, CXXII, &c.

CXXXI. Sonnet.—Necessity. See notes to pieces Nos. II, and LXVII.

CXXXII. La ménagère. See note to piece No. CXV.

CXXXIII. To little Jeanne. See notes to pieces Nos. CX, CXXII, CXXX, &c.

CXXXIV. The black point. See note to piece No. XXX.

CXXXV. The history of a soul. M. Eugène Manuel is a Parisian by birth and the author of three collections of verse, *Pages intimes* (1866.) *Poëmes populaires* (1872) and *Pendant al guerre* (1872). He has also written a drama *Les ouvriers* which was acted in 1870 at the *Théâtre Français* with the most brilliant success. His poetry is full of thought. Judging from his style as well as matter he must have read the English poets a good deal. His mind has many of the traits of Longfellow's.

CXXXVI. The doves. See notes to pieces Nos. LXXXIX, and CXIX.

CXXXVII. Promenades et intérieurs. François Coppée, born in Paris, is the author of several collections of poems, and also of several dramas in verse. Among the former we may mention *Le Reliquaire*, *Les poëmes modernes*, *La grève des forgerons*, *Lettre d'un Mobile breton*, *Plus de sang*, *and Les humbles ;* and among the latter, *Le passant*, *Deux douleurs*, *Fais ce que dois*, *L'Abandonnée*, *Les bijoux de la délivrance* and *Le rendez-vous*. The small piece given here reminds one pleasantly of Shenstone's *School-Mistress*.

CXXXVIII. To the swallow. M. Sully Prudhomme contributes largely still to the *Revue des deux mondes*. He is the

author of *Stances et poëmes*, *Les solitudes*, *Les destins*, and *Les épreuves* a collection of sonnets. He has also translated classical works in verse with great ability.

CXXXIX. A mother's heart. M. Louis Ratisbonne's translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, a work of great ability was honored with the approbation of the French Academy. He is an acute critic and a very popular essayist, and some of his dramas have had well-deserved success on the stage, notably *Héro et Léandre*, and *La comédie enfantine*. His poems are, *Printemps de la vie*, (1857) *Les figures jeunes* (1865,) *Les petits hommes* (1868) and *Les petites femmes* (1872.)

CXL. Sonnet——The miracle of the Virgin. See note to piece No. CXXXIX.

CXLI. The sower. This is one of Victor Hugo's earlier poems. See note to piece No. XXXII &c.

CXLII. Sonnet.—A dream. See note to piece No. CXXXVIII.

CXLIII. Sonnet.—Autumn sunnet. See note to piece No. I for an account of Leconte de Lisle. We append here an extract from the article in the *Bengal Magazine* referred to in that note.

"His principal works are *Poëmes antiques* published in 1852, *Poëmes et poésies* published in 1855, and *Poésies complètes* published in 1858, besides a heap of contributions to various reviews, especially the *Revue Contemporaine*, which are still to be collected, and are worth the collecting.

"The faults generally attributed to all Asiatic or half caste poets, writing in the languages of Europe, are weakness, languor, conventionalism, and imitation. From most of these defects Leconte de Lisle is singularly free. He is wonderfully vigorous, and very often thoroughly original. Not only is he very well read, not only has he meditated much, but he has that gifted poetic eye which can seize at once and extract poetry from the meanest objects. He has in a word

'The vision and the faculty divine.'

"Of his style a French critic of no mean repute—himself a poet—Charles Baudelaire, thus writes: "Leconte de Lisle

possesses absolute rule ever his idea; but this would not amount to much if he did not possess also the dexterous use of his tool. His language is always noble, decided, strong, without any shrill clamorous note, and also without any false prudishness. His vocabulary is very extensive, and his arrangement of his words is always remarkable, as framing clearly and distinctly what he has to say. His rhythm has great breadth and certainty, and his instrument has the soft but large and profound accent of what mucisians would call the alto."

* * * * * * *

"The descriptive pieces in his poems are the best. The fields at mid-day,—the desert,—the ocean in its magnificence,—an animal, say a tiger, in its fury or in its repose,—the beauty of a peasant girl in the far, far East,—these are the sorts of topics in which he excels."

CXLIV. Reverie. Auguste Lacaussade was born in the island of Bourbon about 1815. He has published a remarkable translation of Macpherson's Gaelic poems, and was for sometime the literary secretary of M. Sainte-Beuve. His principal poetical works are *Poëms et paysages*, and *Les èpaves*. He lives honourably by his pen in Paris, and is or was the Editor of the *Revue Européenne*.

With the melancholy music of Millevoye he unites a force, a passion, a pathos of his own which sets him, not indeed in the first rank of the French poets, but in a position far more elevated than Millevoye's. *Les soleils de Juin* and *Les soleils de Novembre* are pieces which are often to be met with in collections of French poetry, and which fully deserve the praise they have received.

CXLV. Intérieur.—À ma mère. See note to piece No. CXV. With one or two strokes a true poet can sometimes give us a picture. Shakespeare's description of evening was

"Light thickens,
And the crow makes wing to the rooky wood."

This is M. André Theuriet's description of a midsummer dawn,

"Je m'endors, et là-bas le frissonnant matin
Baigne les pampres verts d'une rougeur furtive,
Et toujours cette odeur amoureuse m'arrive
Avec le dernier chant d'un rossignol lointain
Et les premiers cris de la grive. . . ."

M. Theuriet is not a Shakespeare, but these five lines are sufficient to show that here we have a poet indeed,—a poet worthy of all honor.

CXLVI. Choir of satyrs. M. Autran was born at Marseilles. In 1832 he published an ode to Lamartine which brought him to the notice of the literary world. His works are *Les poëmes de la mer*, *Ludibria Ventis*, *Milianah*, *Laboureurs et soldats*, *La vie rurale*, *Epitres rustiques*, *Le poëme des beaux jours*, besides a tragedy *La fille d'Eschyle* acted in the Odéon in 1848, and *Le cyclope* after Euripides published in 1863. M. Autran is a member of the French Academy and is celebrated for his knowledge of the classics.

CXLVII. The hope in God. For a notice of Alfred de Musset see note to piece No. LVI. Pascal and Locke and even Kant are hardly treated with justice in this poem. It is good to be terse and epigrammatic but not at the expense of perfect fairness and accuracy.

CXLVIII. Man and the sea. See note to piece No. XLIX.

CXLIX. Christmas. See notes to pieces Nos. LXXXIX. and CXIX.

CL Sonnet. Avarita. See notes to piece Nos. VIII and CXXVII.

CLI. The sword of Angantyr. See notes to pieces Nos. I and CXLIII.

CLII. Le convoi d'une pauvre fille. See note to piece No. LXXVI.

CLIII. What the swallows say. See notes to pieces Nos. LXXXIX and CXIX.

CLIV. Landscape. M. Georges Lafenestre, the author of this piece published a collection of poems under the title of *Les espérances*. He has contributed largely to the periodicals of the

day, and his critiques on literary and artistic subjects are held in high estimation.

CLV. The swan. See note to piece No. CXXXVIII.

CLVI. Night. Madame Emile de Girardin was a great beauty in her time "with blue eyes and golden hair," and she lived in the midst of a fashionable circle that all but worshipped her.

"Elle avait tant d'espoir en entrant dans le monde,
Orgueilleuse et les yeux baissés."

Of her poetry Lamartine said:—"Les vers de jeunesse de Madame de Girardin ont tout ce que l'atmosphère dans laquelle elle vivait comporte; c'est de la poésie à mi-voix, à chastes images, à intentions fines, à grâces décentes, à pudeur voilée de style. Le seul défaut de ces vers, c'est l'excès de l'esprit; l'esprit, ce grand corrupteur du génie, est le fléau de la France."

CLVII. Romance. Châteaubriand's prose is poetry, but he has written very little verse, and that little is not of a high order. Few are gifted to excel in both.

CLVIII. Dante. See note to piece No. LXI.

CLIX. The willows. See note to piece No. XXII.

CLX. On the death of his daughter. See note to piece No. XXXII, &c. Have we not here the same cry that thrilled the hearts of hearers three thousand years ago!

तिष्ठेल्लोको विना सूर्य्यं अन्नं वा सलिलं विना।
नतु रामं विना देहे तिष्ठेत्तु मम जीवितम्॥

CLXI. The dream of Lucretia. M. François Ponsard, born at Vienna in the Dauphiné, is the author of the tragedy of *Lucrèce* which was acted for the first time at the Odéon in 1842, and which made his name at once famous. He has written comedies as well as tragedies subsequently. His dramas are, *Agnès de Méranie*, (1846.) *Charlotte Corday*, (1850) *Horace et Lydie*, (1850 *Ulysse*, (1852.) *L'Honneur et l'argent*, (1853.) *Ce qui plait aux femmes*, (1860) *Le lion amoureux*, (1866.) *Galileé* (1867).

CLXII. Sonnet.——The Pyrenees. Guillaume de Saluste Seigneur du Bartas, born near Auch, was so celebrated amongst

his contemporaries that in ten years, namely between 1574 and 1584, his poem of *The week or the creation of the world*, divided into seven cantos, corresponding to the seven days of the creation, passed through more than thirty editions. Besides this poem Du Bartas composed *Judith* a tragedy, *The triumph of faith* a poem, and several lyrical works of considerable merit.

CLXIII. Les hurleurs. See note to pieces Nos. I and CXLIII.

CLXIV. After the battle. See notes to pieces Nos. XXXII. &c. A good account of Victor Hugo's father the hero here mentioned, and a colonel in Napoleon's army will be found in the poet's life published in England under the title of *Victor Hugo, a life related by one who has witnessed it*, 2 Vols.

CLXV. To Pépa. See notes to pieces Nos. LVI and CXLVII for notices of Alfred de Musset.

CLXVI. Concluding sonnet. The writer of these pages has only to add here, that the pieces signed A are by her dear and only sister Arû, who fell asleep in Jesus on the 23rd July 1874, at the early age of twenty years. The last piece she translated was Colinette. Had she lived this book with her help might have been better, and the writer might perhaps have had less reason to be ashamed of it, and less occasion to ask for the reader's indulgence. Alas!

"Of all sad words of tongue and pen
The saddest are these,—it might have been."

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